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IRISH PROVERBS AND IRISH NATIONAL CHARACTER

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THIS paper, like some more important contributions to knowledge, had its origin in a symposium. A faculty club, devoted to the study of the history of religions, was listening to a learned discourse on the later Greek civilization in Alexandria and some of the island cities. The lecturer remarked that if we only possessed the proverbs current among the people, we should be better able to understand their national character. He was interrupted by one of his hearers, who protested that proverbs reflect general human wisdom rather than the special traits of a particular people. There ensued a discussion, in which two or three classical scholars, an Indic philologist, an Arabist, and a medievalist exchanged opinions without coming to any positive conclusion. But all agreed that it would be well to have the theory of national character tried out in particular areas more thoroughly than it has been hitherto; and the present writer, who had been guilty of the original interruption, undertook, by way of penalty, to report on the situation in Irish. My examination of the subject has been most tentative, and the account of it here, because of limitations of time and space, is very incomplete. I hope to publish some of my material more fully at another time. But the

present brief paper may at least serve some purpose in defining the problem.

The question of national character in proverbs is, of course, by no means new to paroemiologists. My original impulse in denying such a character came, not so much from my own observations—for I have not been in any systematic way an investigator of proverbial literature—as from the fact that I knew that two of my personal friends who are experts in the field, Professors Archer Taylor and B. F. Whiting, had questioned the theory, the latter in conversation and the former in his admirable book on *The proverb*.¹ Any consultation of the literature of the subject reveals at once a great difference of opinion upon the question at issue. A priori, there seems to be no reason why races or nations should not express their character in their popular sayings, just as individuals show their personal traits by the proverbs they have constantly on their lips. It is commonly assumed that they do, I should say, by those who have

¹ *The proverb* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), p. 164. I wish to acknowledge at once my indebtedness to Professor Taylor. Although he deals very little with Celtic proverbs, I have profited at every turn by his general discussion and have drawn on him occasionally for illustrative material. The opinions of both Taylor and Whiting on national proverbs are reflected in the brief discussion in the report of the Committee on Proverbs of the Modern Language Association (see the *Modern language forum*, XXIV [1939], 76).

not made a special study of the matter. Lord Bacon, in one of the most familiar utterances on the subject, declared that "the genius, wit, and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs," and Erasmus compared proverbs to wines which cannot be transported. And in this opinion they have had plenty of followers. Taylor² lists a whole series of studies of national traits in the proverbs of different countries, though he characterizes their results as "insignificant." In the Celtic field (which Taylor does not undertake to cover) two of the most industrious collectors have tried to show national characteristics in both Irish and Scottish Gaelic sayings.³ In view of the existing differences of opinion, an examination of the Irish material seems worth while.

I have already said that my study of the problem has been thus far of a very tentative character. To get securely valid conclusions we need, in the first place, more nearly complete collections of the Irish gnomic material, and, what is more important, we ought to know more about the age and originality of particular sayings. Only a limited number have been dated, and nobody has attempted to make a chronological collection or to distinguish proverbs which were clearly borrowed from those which were probably composed in Ireland. The currency or vogue of individual sayings is another important consideration in determining their bearing on national character. They should be weighed as well as counted. It means little to find recorded a proverb, say, in praise of thrift, if the people never use it. I shall mention these considerations in dealing with particular proverbs, but they have

never been adequately applied to the general body of material.

Of that material there is at least no reason to complain of a lack of quantity. For the modern Irish period I know of over fifty printed collections, longer or shorter, besides several in manuscript. The collectors list over eight thousand Irish proverbs (of course, with a vast number of duplicates or close variants), and more than four thousand have been published in the closely related Scottish Gaelic. For the purposes of this present study I have used O'Muirghessa's proverbs of Ulster (over 1,900 in number), O'Siochfhradha's proverbs of Munster (about 2,150), a general collection by O'Rahilly (about 400), and several hundred that I have noted down from my own reading of Irish literature of all periods.⁴

I should add that in any thorough analysis of this material one should take into account several very early Irish compilations of proverbial morality. I have in mind particularly the *Testament of Morann*, a document probably of the eighth century, though ascribed to a legendary

⁴ A convenient account of the publications about proverbs in Irish, Scottish Gaelic, and Manx will be found in T. F. O'Rahilly, *A miscellany of Irish proverbs* (Dublin, 1922). The first part of the book is an edition of 231 proverbs noted by Mícheál Óg O'Longáin about the year 1800, to which Mr. O'Rahilly has added nearly 200 sayings, triads, and proverbial phrases collected by himself from various sources. In his bibliography he lists over fifty collections, longer or shorter, of proverbs from various parts of Ireland. The most extensive compilation listed by him is the *Seanfhocla uladh* (1907), containing 1,637 Ulster proverbs. A second edition, published in 1931, adds some 300 to this total. Besides this I have had access to two other collections, published since 1922: *Seanfhoicil na muimhneach*, by "An Seabhac" (i.e., Padraig O'Siochfhradha), published in 1926 and containing 2,152 proverbs; and *Seanaimeaireacht*, by D. A. Murchadha (Dublin, 1939), containing a shorter list. There must be an enormous number of proverbs in the manuscript materials assembled by Mr. Delargy at the Folklore Institute in Dublin. But nobody can predict how many new sayings they would add to those in print.

² Pp. 164 ff. To Taylor's references may be added *Racial proverbs* by Dr. S. G. Champion (New York, 1938), in which the subject is discussed in special prefaces by authorities in the various fields.

³ E. O'Muirghessa and A. Nicolson.

figure of the first, and the *Instructions of Cormac*, the *Old sayings of Fithal*, and the *Sayings of Flann Fina*, all three composed probably between 800 and 900, though they are attributed, respectively, to King Cormac of the third century; his counselor, Fithal; and King Aldfrith, the seventh-century king of Northumbria. The sayings in these old compilations are not strictly popular proverbs; at least, there is no evidence that most of them ever had general circulation. The treatises are rather literary works comparable to the Wisdom books of the Old Testament. But, like the Proverbs of Solomon, they contain moral wisdom in aphoristic form, and some of the sayings certainly did circulate and established patterns of proverbial formulas.⁵

These early collections obviously throw light on the antiquity of many individual sayings. Another means of getting at this information is by collecting proverbs from early literary texts. But this nearly all remains to be done. Mr. O'Rahilly gives early citations for a considerable number of the proverbs in his book, and a systematic collection from the sagas of the Ulster cycle was made by Miss Alice Bell (now Mrs. Robertson) in an unpublished doctoral dissertation at Radcliffe College.

After this account of the nature of the material, it will be apparent why I do not

claim to have arrived at any final solution of the problem. That must await a more thorough classification of the proverbs than has yet been made. But in my tentative discussion I have approached the question in two ways.

1. First, I have taken certain traits generally supposed to be characteristic of the Irish and have examined the proverbs to see if they reflect these qualities. But I realized from the outset that in this method there is danger that one will argue in a vicious circle—first, selecting proverbs in the light of a preconceived idea of the Irish and then using the proverbs to confirm the preconception. So I decided to check myself by a second procedure.

2. I have selected a number of recent works of a representative popular character and have made a strictly objective and, to the best of my ability, complete collection of the proverbs they contain. In this way I have assembled, without exercising personal choice, several hundred sayings which I know to be current and have examined them to see what traits they reveal. Limitations of space will prevent my publishing these contemporary proverbs in this article, but I hope to print them at another time. Meanwhile, I will give here the results of the first part of my inquiry.

Of the thousands of sayings in the collections I have mentioned, it is obvious that a great many are irrelevant to our particular problem. Proverbs on weather and the seasons, medical maxims, and many sayings about trades and mechanical crafts have little bearing on individual or national character. The same is true of much animal lore, except where the animals, as in Aesopic fables, represent human qualities. Proverbs of foreign origin or of universal currency should also be used cautiously as evidence. A borrowed

⁵ *Audacht Morainn* is edited by Rudolf Thurneysen in the *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, XI (1916), 56 ff.; the *Tecosca Cormaic*, by Kuno Meyer in the "Todd lecture series" of the Royal Irish Academy, Vol. XV (Dublin, 1909); the *Senbriathra Fithail*, by Rudolf Thurneysen in *Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, phil.-hist. Kl., N.S., Vol. XIV (1912), and by R. M. Smith in *Revue celtique*, XLV (1928), 1 ff.; and the *Briathra Flainn Fina*, by Kuno Meyer in the *Anecdota from Irish manuscripts*, III (Halle, 1909). There is much material common to the collections of Cormac, Fithal, and Flann. The *Triads of Ireland* are edited by Kuno Meyer in the "Todd lecture series," of the Royal Irish Academy, Vol. III (Dublin, 1906). There is a good general account of this "instructional" literature by R. M. Smith in *Speculum*, II (1927), 411 ff.

proverb, to be sure, may be as indicative as a native one of the character of the man who uses it. But in appraising the proverbial stock of a people, the old sayings, rooted in the national tradition, seem more significant.

Very many Irish sayings are so close in words and phrasing to English counterparts that one strongly suspects the Irish to be borrowed. Out of the hundreds that could be cited, I have room for only a few illustrations:

Is fearr go mall ná go bráth (Better late than never).

An té a chomhnas a' t-slat milleán sé a' mac (He that spares the rod, spoils the child).

Cuidigheann Dá leis an té a chuidigheas leis féin (God helps him who helps himself). The idea, of course, is universal: *Fortes Fortuna adjuvat*.

Os amharc, os cuimhne (Out of sight, out of mind).

Is tighe fuil ná uisce (Blood is thicker than water).

Níor bhris focal maith fiacail riamh ('Never did a good word break a tooth'). Not so clearly from "Soft words break no bones." Irish has a word-play not in English. Moreover, both have a source in Prov. 25:15 or Eccles. 28:21.

Sguabann sguab úr go glan acht tá fios ag an t-seansguab ar na coirnéalaibh (A new broom sweeps clean—with an addition, 'but the old broom knows the corners,' which I thought might be characteristically Irish until my friend, Dr. Sven Liljebäck, told me it is current in Swedish).

Although there is, in general, a greater probability that the modern Irish borrowed proverbs from the English than that the English borrowed from the Irish, close resemblance does not always prove that the borrowing was in that direction. The Irish *Féarr sean-fhiacha ná sean-shala* has a counterpart in northern English (Scots), "Better auld debts than auld

sairs." But the Irish proverb, in the older form *Ferr senfhiacha senfhala*, is recorded in the collections attributed⁶ to Fithal and to Flann Fína. The Scots version comes doubtless from the Scottish Gaelic equivalent of the Irish. Again, the modern Irish proverb *Is fearr leath-bhairgein ná bheith gan arán* is very close to "A half loaf is better than no bread," from which it may well have been borrowed. But the idea is the same as that of the Old Irish *Ferr leth láneteach* ('Better a half than a full refusal'), and *Ferr beg éra* ('A little is better than a refusal'), both ascribed also to Flann Fína.⁷ These examples show the desirability of a general chronological study of the Irish sayings.

Of the proverbs of universal, or at least of widespread, international currency, I also have space for very few examples. They form a large part of the material. In fact, there are so few Irish sayings that one cannot easily match in English or other languages, without having any special knowledge of this kind of lore, that I sometimes have wondered if any proverb can be regarded as the exclusive or original property of any people. But the same underlying idea is often presented by different figures or comparisons in different localities, and the varieties are sometimes of interest. The following are a few specimens of these sayings of wide distribution:

Sgéitheann fíon fírinne (Wine discloses truth; *In vino veritas*).

Is olc a' breathamh ar dathaibh dall (*Caecus de coloribus non iudicat*).

Bí an t-súil do shíor mar am-bíonn an grádh (*Ubi amor, ibi oculus*). An early equivalent, *Is airde na sercei sirshilliuth* ('Long gazing is a sign of love') occurs in the *Tochmarc Étaíne*.

Labhráidh duine, innisidh Dia ('Man speaks, but God tells the story'). A variant of *Homo proponit, Deus disponit*, which has its re-

⁶ See O'Rahilly, p. 1.

⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 41.

mote Islamic counterpart, "The servant plans, but Allah brings to pass," and perhaps an ultimate origin in Prov. 16:9.

Mol an lá um trathnóna ('Praise the day in the evening'). A special form of "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched," "Don't crow until you are out of the woods," etc. But the Irish phraseology has close parallels: "Schöne Tage soli man abends loben, schöne Frauen morgens," and in the *Hávamál*, "At kveldi skal dag leyfa," with succeeding lines which look like embellishments of the original proverb.⁸

Aithnigtear cara i gcruatan ('A friend is known in need'), which I include because it is one of the earliest recorded Irish proverbs. It occurs in the form *Is and asgnintar in charait in tan mbíther* "in periculis" in the ninth-century Milan glosses, 108b 4.⁹

It would be easy to multiply examples like these of Irish proverbs with counterparts in other tongues. But I must devote the rest of my space to the consideration of national characteristics. What, then, are the features to look for? Three things, I think, may be expected to distinguish a body of national proverbs: (I) local color or setting; (II) local stylistic devices, formulas, and the like; and (III) national customs, traits, virtues, or vices which the proverbs may reflect.

I. LOCAL COLOR

Local color we unquestionably find in the Irish proverbs. It appears most plainly in the ascription of the sayings themselves to national figures, historic or legendary. I have spoken of Cormac, Fithal, and Flann Fína. An obscure Crimthann Nia Nair also appears as authority for a proverb in an early saga. Goban Saor, the mythical artificer, is credited with many sayings, or they are introduced into anec-

dotes about him. Other figures are used in proverbial comparisons: *coem cách co h-Etain* ('fair is every one until [compared with] Etain'); *comh sean leis a'Chailleach Bearra* ('as old as the Old Woman of Beare'). A striking example of this kind of personal allusion appears in the Irish saying which corresponds to the English counsel that a man should have "more than one string to his bow": *Ní ar aon-chois tháinig Pátraic go h-Eireann* ('Patrick did not come to Ireland on one leg').¹⁰

Local color may also appear in references to local customs:

Fál ar an ngort tar éis no foghla ('Fencing the field after the cattle-raid'). Cf. "shutting the barn door after the horse is stolen," or "covering the well after the child is drowned." Cattle-raids were, of course, a familiar feature of Irish life.

Ní bheag nod don eolach ('A manuscript contraction, a compendium scribendi, is enough for a scholar'). Cf. *Verbum sapienti*, 'A word to the wise.' The reference to the manuscript stroke may occur in the proverb outside of Ireland, but it is certainly appropriate to the scribes of the heavily abbreviated Irish writings.

Is maith an tiomanaidhe an fear bhíos ar an gcladh ('The man on the ditch is a good hurler'—'The looker-on sees more than the gamester').

Dána gach fear go tulaig ('Bold is every man until [he reaches] the hill,' i.e., until he enters the assembly).

Ceithre neithe nach tugtha d'Eireannaibh ionntaobh leo . i . adharc bó, cráb chapaill, dranna madra agus gáire Sassanaigh ('Four things that Irishmen never trusted: the horn of a cow, the hoof of a horse, the growl of a dog, and the smile of an Englishman'). Oddly enough, allusions to the English, to landlords, and to agents do not seem to be common in current Irish sayings.¹¹

¹⁰ Another Irish equivalent is *Bíodh dá abhraís ar do choigeal agat* ('Have two stricks on your distaff').

¹¹ I have been more struck by slurs on landlords and officials in a very small collection of Russian proverbs called to my attention by my friend Mrs. Norman Haggood.

⁸ These and other parallels, but not the Irish saying, are discussed by Taylor, pp. 178 ff.

⁹ See O'Rahilly, p. 80, where variant forms are given and the "literary parents" in Ecclus. 12:8, 9 and Ennius are cited.

II. STYLISTIC FORMULAS

Proverbs tend, as everybody knows, to follow certain familiar patterns, "Better x than y ," for example, "Better late than never," "Better a half-loaf than no bread." Most of these forms are of wide diffusion, and it would be hard to prove their origin in any particular region. But there are local fashions in these matters. It has been pointed out that late Greek proverbs tend to use a narrative form where western Europe prefers a maxim. Compare "A man gave another an ass, and he looked at its teeth" with "Don't look a gift-horse in the mouth."¹² Taylor holds that the *Man soll* formula is characteristically Germanic, and it is certainly well established in Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and German. But the Irish proverbs in *Dligid* offer a pretty close parallel. Irish has favorite patterns of its own, particularly noticeable in the old compilations of *Morann*, *Flann Fína*, and *Fithal*, where allowance must, of course, be made for artistic composition. Of the "Better x than y " type, there are nearly a hundred in *Flann Fína*. A considerable number have the form referred to just above, beginning with *Dligid* ('deserves,' 'ought to have'): *Dligid aide urraim* ('A teacher deserves respect'); *Dligid maith mórad* ('Good deserves to be magnified'). There is a similar form beginning with *Adcota* ('obtains,' 'produces'): *Adcota maith a molad* ('Good obtains its praise'); and of this type *Flann Fína* has over sixty examples. The same collection has a score or more in the pattern *Tosach eolais imchomarc* ('The beginning of learning is inquiry'), a form which may not have been uninfluenced by the biblical "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It still occurs in modern proverbs,

as in *Tosach slainte codla* ('Sleep is the beginning of health') in O'Siochfhradha's Munster collection. A favorite Irish form, and perhaps the most peculiarly characteristic one, is represented by two proverbs I have already quoted: *Cóem cách co h-Etain* ('Fair is everyone until [compared to] Etain'), and *Dána gách go tulaigh* ('Bold is everyone until [he reaches] the hill'). This form has persisted from the earliest sagas down to the present day. A modern example is *Ughdar gach neach go labhrann* ('Everyone is an authority until he speaks').

It would be interesting to have a careful classification of the formulas in the whole body of the modern Gaelic proverbs, to determine to what extent the old patterns have persisted and perhaps replaced different forms in foreign proverbs of similar import.

In connection with the formal types which give local flavor to proverbs, mention should also be made of legal maxims, many of which, in Irish as in other languages, have found their way into popular use. They ought to be systematically collected. But I have space here for only two examples: *Is fiach ma gelltar* ('It is a debt if it is promised'), a close equivalent of Chaucer's *Biheste is dette*,¹³ and *Is le gach buin a laegh* ('To every cow its calf'), i.e., to the owner of every manuscript its copy—King Diarmaid mac Cearbhaill's famous announcement of the principle of copyright.¹⁴

I ought also to explain that I have not attempted to deal here with metrical proverbs, which, of course, exhibit the formal and stylistic traits of Irish. But they present a special problem, as being in considerable measure artistic productions. Their character is well illustrated in the

¹² Cited by Taylor, p. 158, from Krumbacher, *Sitzungsberichte der Münchener Akademie, phil.-hist. Kl.*, II (1893), No. 1, 23.

¹³ Discussed by O'Rahilly, p. 81, where the Chaucerian parallel is noted. On legal maxims in general see Taylor, pp. 86 ff.

¹⁴ See O'Rahilly, p. 94.

charming little book *Amhráin chúige Chonnacht: an leath-rann* (Dublin, n.d.), by Dr. Douglas Hyde, former president of Éire. Dr. Hyde has published a number of complete quatrains, as repeated or recorded, and in the case of many couplets which may or may not have formed parts of quatrains he has composed lines to fill out the stanzas.¹⁵

III. NATIONAL TRAITS

It might be expected that the most interesting characteristic of a body of national proverbs would be found in its reflection of the popular character. In fact, it was the prevalence of this idea that led in the first place to this investigation. But I may say at once that the evidence afforded by Irish proverbs is very dubious.

Consider, for example, the treatment of women by the proverb-makers. Mr. O'Muirgheasa, compiler of one of the most extensive collections, the *Seanfhocla uladh*, says in the introduction to his first edition that Irish proverbs show extraordinary respect for women and priests, often sneered at in other lands.¹⁶ But on the second page of his book I find the following gallant tribute: *Tri ntdh gan riaghail: bean, muc, is muille* ('Three things without rule: a woman, a pig, and a mule'). And the same collection contains: *Is foisge do mhnaoi leithsgéal ná braisgin* ('An excuse is nearer to a woman than her apron'); *Is féarr órlach gasúir no troigh cailín* ('Better is an inch of a boy than a foot of a girl'); *An áit i mbíonn mná bíonn gab* ('Where there are women, there is

gabble'); *Uabhar ban is uabhar sagart* ('Pride of women and pride of priests'—two things to be feared); and the triad, a variant of the venerable saying that goes back to Prov. 27:15,

Sólás an fhir bhreoidhte,
Toit 'sa toigh,
Bean ag troid,
Is droich-phlainncead

('The sick man's solace: smoke in his roof, a quarrelsome woman, and a bad blanket'). It is obvious that Mr. O'Muirgheasa's own collection hardly bears out his claim that the Irish proverb-makers treated women with exceptional respect, and there are plenty of other Irish sayings which reflect the common disparagement of the sex as being gossips, unable to keep secrets, extravagant, stubborn, unaccountable, or not always what they appear to be. But, on the other side, it is fair to point out that there are proverbs in praise of women, though rather less numerous than the opposite sort. Such are: *Is féarr bean ná spré* ('A woman is better than treasure'—perhaps of biblical origin); *Mairg na deineann comhairle deaghamhá* ('Woe to him who does not follow the counsel of a good woman'); and *Is leath beathadh bean mhaith tighé* ('A good housewife is half of life'). The fact is that on this subject, as on many others, the people have contradictory sayings, presenting two sides of the case. It is recognized as characteristic of popular wisdom that it often represents a "middle way."¹⁷

The cynical strictures of the Irish proverb-makers are not confined to women. Priests, in spite of Mr. O'Muirgheasa's contrary impression, get their fair share of abuse, and human nature in general comes under considerable condemnation. I shall not take the space to illustrate these sayings here. But there are so many

¹⁵ A considerable number of these metrical proverbs are printed in O'Muirgheasa's *Seanfhocla uladh*, pp. 174-208. Cf. also T. F. O'Rahilly, *Dánfhocail: Irish epigrams in verse* (Dublin, 1921). The *dánfhocail*, or versified sayings, are, as O'Rahilly's subtitle indicates, really of the nature of epigrams, and they often resemble the Priamel, discussed by Taylor at pp. 179 ff.

¹⁶ Nicolson makes the same claim with regard to women for Scottish Gaelic.

¹⁷ See Taylor's comments, p. 168.

comments of this nature on love and marriage that the editor of the Munster proverbs thinks it necessary to explain that they do not represent serious Irish opinion.¹⁸

Probably no quality of character is more commonly ascribed to the Irishman, whether justly or unjustly, than combativeness, the love of a fight. On this subject his proverbs are pretty evenly divided. On the one side are warlike counsels like these:

Gach sluagh nach saigh, saighfidir ('Every troop that does not attack will be attacked'—'The best parry is a lunge').

Be theid as no ná theid, ní theid fear na h-cadargala ('Whoever comes off or doesn't, the peacemaker will not come off').

Ní frith breithem bus fíriu cathrae ('There has been found no juster judge than the battlefield'), recorded in the ancient text of Morann.

Is buaine bladn ná saoghal ('Fame is more enduring than life'). An exhortation to bravery which occurs in various forms in the older sagas.¹⁹ It is a characteristic sentiment of the heroic age and by no means peculiarly Irish (cf. *Beowulf*, 11, 1386 ff., and *Aeneid* x. 467 ff.).

Over against these we find the praise of peace:

Is ferr síth sochocadh ('Peace is better than successful war'), ascribed to both Fithal and Flann Fína.

Féarr teithe maith ná droich-sheasamh ('Better a good flight than a bad stand'), also recorded as Fithal's and Flann Fína's in the archaic form *Ferr teiched tairisium*.²⁰

An té grádh as an dáinsear cailltear ann é ('He who loves danger shall perish in it')—paralleled by the more laconic form in Morann: *Gonas gentair* ('Who wounds shall be wounded'). Compare also Matt. 26:52.

Is féarr an t-sláinte ná na táinte ('Health is better than raids').

¹⁸ An Seabhaic, p. 31.

¹⁹ See O'Rahilly, pp. 38-39.

²⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 15.

Again with relation to spending and saving, there are proverbs on both sides—once more the "middle way." In the case of talkativeness, a quality often attributed to Irishmen, we find little praise of it in the popular sayings. On the contrary there is frequent commendation of silence or of deeds as compared with words.

It is probably generally recognized that a conspicuous characteristic of the Irish people is its devotion to religion, its Catholic Christian piety. As might be expected, this trait finds frequent expression in popular sayings, many of them of biblical origin. They do not appear to be any more numerous than those current in other Christian lands, or in any way different in kind. But it is perhaps not without significance that the saying I have found to be most often recurrent is the familiar expression of faith in divine help in trouble: *Is foisge cabhair Dé ná an doras* ('The help of God is nearer than the door'). Another proverb of similar import, *Níor dhún Dia bearna riamh ná h-oslochadh sé ceann aile* ('God never closed one pass [gap, path], that he did not open another') has an English counterpart: "God never closes a door without opening a window."

If the Irishman's Christian faith is expressed in many current sayings, the same is not true of his supposed absorption in fairy lore. Except for two common references to the pooka—*Níl sprid ná púca gan fios a chúise aige féin* ('There is no spirit or pooka who doesn't know his own business') and *An rud a sgríobhann an phúca, léigheann sé féin é* ('What the pooka writes, he reads it [or léigheadh, "let him read"] himself'), and occasional admonitions about the keeping of *geasa* ('taboos,' 'mysterious injunctions'), I have found very little mention of supernatural doings or beliefs.

The one quality, I suppose, which most persons look for in any product of the

Irish mind is humor, and I have often been asked about it while engaged on the present study. Of course, the proverbs of all peoples, with their neat epigrammatic turns, their unexpected figures and incongruous comparisons, show a considerable element of humor, or perhaps oftener of wit. In the satirical sayings, too, we must assume that a humorous purpose often tempers the cynicism. These qualities have been sufficiently illustrated for Irish by the proverbs already cited, but I should not say that they are more conspicuous in Irish than in the sayings of other nations. And it is interesting to note that Mr. O'Muirgheasa, the enthusiastic compiler of the Ulster collection, holds the Irish proverbs to be surpassed for humor by the Scottish Gaelic. I have not attempted to follow up this comparison. Such humor as the Irish show, he thinks, is mainly that of exaggeration, a form commonly supposed to be characteristically American.

A deliberate attempt at comic effect appears chiefly in those proverbs of the type which have been labeled as "Wellerisms," because of the constant use of the device by Sam Weller in the *Pickwick papers*.²¹ They have an additional phrase or a tag, which brings in some incongruous situation. "There's nothing so refreshin' as sleep, sir, as the servant-girl said afore she drank the egg-cupful of laudanum," observed Mr. Weller, recommending a good night's rest to Mr. Pickwick. Of course, Wellerisms do not necessarily occur with proverbs, but they are very commonly attached to them.²² " 'Virtus in medio,' said the Devil, and sat between two priests (or two harlots)." A considerable number of

Irish proverbs have tags of this sort, and in those I have collected from the conversation of Tomas O Muirthe, reported in *Cainnt an t-sean-shaoghail*,²³ I am sometimes unable to judge whether the additions are generally current or are the humorous comment of the speaker. The following are a few examples of Irish Wellerisms:

"Glór mór ar bheagan olna," mar adubhairt an t-Aidhbheirseoir mar a bhí sé ag bearradh na muice ("Much talk about little wool," as the Adversary said when shearing the pig").

"Is deas an rud a' ghlaíne," mar dubhairt an bhean nuair thionntaigh sí a léine in-diaidh seacht m-bliadhna ("Cleanliness is a good thing," as the woman said when she changed her shirt after seven years').

"Is luachmar an rud an t-anam," mar adubhairt an tailleíúir, agus é ag rith on nganndal ("Life is precious," as the tailor said when he was running away from the gander").

And at least one of the serious proverbs of pious faith has been given a similar turn: "Bíonn cabhair Dé ar bóthar," mar adubhairt an Goban Saor nuair a theangmhuigh sé ar an sparán ("The help of God is on the way," as the Goban Saor said when he chanced on the purse').

To bring the discussion now briefly to a conclusion, this review of the characteristics, real or supposed, of the Irish people has yielded very little evidence that their national proverbs have been affected by their character or temperament. The presentation of the case is, of course, unsatisfactory because it rests upon one man's canvassing of the great body of proverbial literature, and the material itself cannot be laid before the reader. Somebody else might have caught significant features that I have missed. The method itself, too, is open to criticism, as I have already pointed out, because it deals with certain preconceived notions of the Irish char-

²¹ For further illustrations of the type, with references to earlier discussions, see Taylor, pp. 200 ff.

²² For an extensive collection of American Wellerisms, mostly of the period from 1840 to 1880, both proverbial and nonproverbial, see B. J. Whiting, *American speech*, XX (1945), 1 ff.

²³ Ed. Arland Ussher (Dublin, 1942).

acter. But I hope that any errors that may have arisen from this procedure will be corrected in the study to be published later, in which a considerable body of current proverbs will be collected and examined and published in full. Meanwhile, so far as the evidence now in hand goes, it seems to support Professor Taylor's opinion that the national element in proverbs is not very significant. Irish sayings, like those he has discussed in other tongues, represent, on the whole, common human experience and universal wisdom, generally at a practical level. At the same

time, it should be remembered that the Irish people belong to the same cultural tradition—European and Christian—as ourselves, and the proverbs with which I have compared theirs lie, with very few exceptions, within the same area. It is possible that if the comparison were extended to a remoter civilization—say that of the Islamic or eastern Asiatic peoples, with their different presuppositions in ethics and religion—national or regional characteristics might become more apparent.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

THE WOOING OF BECFHOLA AND THE STORIES OF CANO, SON OF GARTNÁN

MYLES DILLON

THESE two sagas belong to the cycle of Diarmait, son of Áed Sláine, and Guaire Aidne. Diarmait and Bláthmac, sons of Áed Sláine, became joint kings of Ireland in 643 and died in 665. Guaire Aidne, famous for his hospitality, was king of Connacht and died in 663. Diarmait and Guaire appear as enemies in "The battle of Carn Conaill,"¹ Diarmait overcoming Guaire and then yielding to him on account of his great charity. One other tale about Diarmait has come down to us and is here presented first.

TOCHMARC BECFHOLA ("THE WOOING OF BECFHOLA")

The story is extant in two recensions, one of which is early, the other a late Middle Irish or early Modern Irish redaction. The former is preserved in a gathering of YBL written in 1391 (facsimile ed., 117b 43–119a 35) and in H. 3. 18 (sixteenth century). The latter is in BM Eg. 1781 (fifteenth century): it is a poor performance, lacking important parts of the story. The relationship of Eg. to Y and H is not clear to me and cannot now be established. A new edition of the early recension is desirable. The neuter gender is well preserved, the independent pronoun does not occur, and some early verbal forms have been retained. The common source of Y and H was written in the Old Irish period, not later than the ninth century.

Edited with translation by O'Looney, RIA MSS, Ser. I, I, 172 (Y with variant

¹ Ed. Stokes, ZCP, III, 203–19; cf. "Fragmentary annals" in O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, I, 396–409 (= II, 431–36).

readings from H); O'Grady, *SG*, I, 85 = II, 91 (Eg.).

1. Diarmait, son of Áed Sláine, was king of Tara, and Crimthann, son of Áed, was in fosterage with him as a hostage from Leinster. They went one day to Áth Truim² and met a woman coming eastward across the ford in a chariot. She wore a gold-embroidered smock and a crimson cloak held by a brooch of gold set with precious stones. A golden diadem was on her head, and her collar and shoes were of gold. The chariot was drawn by two dark-gray horses with gold bridles, and their yokes were decorated with silver ornaments.

2. Diarmait asked whence she came and whither she was going, and she replied that she came from no great distance and was in search of seed-wheat. "If thou wilt have the seed of this country," said Diarmait, "I alone have what is worthy of thee." "I shall not refuse," said she, "if the bride-price is paid." "Thou shalt have this little pin," said Diarmait. "I will accept it," said she. He takes her to Tara but cannot tell her name. When the people ask what bride-price he has paid, he tells them that he gave his little pin. "It is small esteem," say all. The druid says: "Becfhola ('small esteem') will be her name."

3. Becfhola desired the love of Crimthann, and he gave her a tryst at the hour of terce on Sunday at Cluain Dá Chaillech, but his people forbade him to abduct the wife of the High King. She set out, however, with her maid on the pretense that she had left certain possessions at Cluain Dá Chaillech and wished to recover them. The king protested against this violation of Sunday,³ but Becfhola persisted.

² "The ford of Trom," i.e., Trim, County Meath.

³ A reference to *Cáin Domnaig* ("the law of Sunday"), a part of which, belonging to the ninth century, was edited by O'Keeffe (*Ériu*, II, 189–214). The prohibition of travel is mentioned in § 23, p. 204. This text is an Irish version of the Epistle of Christ

4. On their way southward from Tara, the women went astray, and as night fell they were attacked by wolves, who devoured the maid. Becfhola took refuge in a tree. She saw a fire in the forest and went toward it. A warrior was cooking a pig over the fire. He was clad in a silk shirt embroidered with circles of gold and silver. A helmet of gold, silver, and crystal was on his head, and so forth. Becfhola sat by the fire. The warrior looked at her but paid her no further heed. When he had finished his cooking, he washed his hands and went away. She followed him to a lake. There was a boat of bronze in the lake attached by a cable to the shore and by another cable to an island. The warrior hauled in the boat, and Becfhola got into it. They went to the island, and she went before him into a house. They ate and drank but did not speak. He lay down and she lay beside him, but he did not turn toward her throughout the night.

5. In the morning they heard a cry, summoning Flann to battle. The warrior took up his weapons and went out. Becfhola watched from the door and saw three others on the shore of the island like unto the warrior in form and age and beauty. She saw four others along by the island with their shields on guard. The warrior and his three companions fought against the other four until all were wounded. They separated, and the warrior returned alone.

6. Becfhola praised the warrior's valor, but he said only that it were well if it had been against enemies. These were the sons of his father's brother, and his companions were his own three brothers. He was Flann, grandson of Fedach, and the grandsons of Fedach were fighting for the Island of Fedach Mac In Daill.⁴ Becfhola offered to stay with him, but he replied that it would be a poor marriage for her to leave the king of Ireland and share the life of a wandering soldier. "Why should we not be lovers now?" said she. "Not now," said he;

"but if the island be mine, and if we live, I shall go to fetch thee, and thou shalt be my wife and with me always. And now go!" She regrets the maid, and he tells her that the girl is alive at the foot of the tree. The warriors of the island are with her and will accompany them home.

7. Becfhola arrives at home to find Diarmait rising on the same Sunday morning. He is glad that she did not travel on a Sunday, and she says that she did not dare to disobey him, as though she had not gone at all. But from that time she used to say:

I spent a night in the forest, in the house on the Island of Mac In Daill. Though I was with a man, it was no sin: it was none too soon when we parted.

The Island of Fedach Mac In Daill in Dubthar in Leinster, although it is close to the road, bearded youths do not find it.

Everyone used to wonder at this.

8. A year from that day Flann came to the door badly wounded. Becfhola greeted him with a quatrain and he replied with a quatrain. She went from the house and followed him and could not be found. Diarmait told his people to let her go unhindered, for it was not known who was going nor who had come.

9. As they were speaking, four young clerics came into the house. Diarmait covered his face in horror at the sight of clerics traveling on a Sunday. But they explained that their journey was no mere wantonness, but that Saint Molaise of Devinish⁵ had sent them. That morning there had been a great fight on the island between two parties of four warriors each, from which only one man had come alive, and he was badly wounded. Molaise had buried the seven dead, and from their clothes and ornaments and weapons there was taken as much gold and silver as two men could carry. The clerics had come to ask how much of the treasure trove the king would claim as his share. Diarmait said that he would take no share of what God had sent to the saint.

"That is the silver and gold with which the sacred emblems of Molaise were decorated, namely his shrine and his satchel and his cro-

concerning Sunday (cf. Priebsch, *MLR*, II [1907], 138). The Old Irish law-tract on the observance of Sunday, which is the *Cáin Domnaig* proper, is printed in *Anc.*, III, 21-27, and the prohibition of travel appears on p. 21.

⁴ "Son of the blind man."

⁵ Devinish Island in Loch Erne.

zier. But Becfhola went with Flann, grandson of Fedach, and she has not since returned. That is The Wooing of Becfhola. Finit."

There are three longer tales about Guaire. One is of special interest, as it presents an Irish parallel to the story of Tristan and Isolde, which is known to be of Irish origin. It is to be discussed here. In the second, *Caithréim Cellaig*,⁶ Guaire appears as a jealous, crafty, and cruel man in contradiction of the common tradition regarding him, so that it seems to reflect the bias of an enemy of Connacht. The third story, *Tromdám Guaire*,⁷ deals with the arrogance of the poets, an abuse which had been the subject of legislation at the Assembly of Druim Cett in 575, and also with the discovery of the Táin, which is there credited to the famous poet Senchán Torpeist. Thurneysen has suggested that this tradition that Senchán was the first to compose a written narrative may be genuine, since it is now established that the written tradition in Irish literature goes back to the sixth century (ZCP, XIX, 209).

SCÉLA CANO MEIC GARTNÁIN ("THE
STORIES OF CANO, SON
OF GARTNÁN")

The story is preserved only in YBL and has been assigned by Thurneysen to a date ca. 900. He has shown that it is a romance of no historical value since the chronology is impossible. Cano died in 688 and cannot therefore have come to Ireland bearing arms in the lifetime of Áedán Mac Gabráin (†606). Moreover, the expedition from Scotland to Ireland is recorded in the *Annals of Ulster* s.a. 667 (=668), when Diarmait and Guaire were already dead, so that Cano could not have

taken part in Diarmait's campaign against Guaire. Finally, these two kings were not contemporaries of Áedán Mac Gabráin. The story is thus an example of historical romance in which historical events and persons are woven into a single narrative without regard for chronology. It is important as a picture of the manners of its time, and especially for the Tristan-motif that forms a part of it.⁸ The parallel rests upon the love-theme, the fact that Cred is the young wife of an old king, whose name is Marcán (diminutive of Marc), and the final episode in which Cano approaches the coast of Ireland in a ship, Cred dies before he reaches land, and he dies soon afterward. The motif of the love-potion does not occur.

Joseph Loth amplified Thurneysen's discussion, and, while stressing the absence of an important feature of the Tristan story, inasmuch as Cano is not akin to Marcán, he recognizes its importance, seeing the essential parallel in the motif of heroic fidelity in love, sealed at last by death.⁹ He supposes, however, that Cano is bound in honor by the obligation of hospitality and points out that the conflict between passion and duty—the moral drama which dominates the story of Tristan and Isolde—is a Celtic motif, as was shown by him (*RC*, XXX, 270). Gaston Paris had seen there a German influence, while Bédier considered it a French creation. Loth regards the story of Cano as a further Irish example, but we shall see that this interpretation rests upon a misunderstanding.

It remains to be said that there are some points of contact between this story and "The wooing of Becfhola." There Crimthann, the foster-son of Diarmait, and the mysterious Flann are the lovers of

⁶ Ed. Kathleen Mulchrone ("Med. and mod. Irish ser.," Vol. IV [Dublin, 1933]).

⁷ Ed. Maud Joynt ("Med. and mod. Irish ser.," Vol. II [Dublin, 1931]); cf. R. Thurneysen, *Die irische Helden- und Königsage*, p. 254.

⁸ Cf. Thurneysen, *ZRP*, XLIII, 385-88. He points out that the love-potion is absent here.

⁹ *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* (1924), pp. 122-33.

Becfhola; here Colcu, son of Marcán and stepson of Cred, and the stranger Cano are the lovers, although Colcu is here rejected by Cred. The refusal by Flann of Becfhola's first approach has a close parallel in Cano's refusal of Cred and suggests a different interpretation from that put forward by Loth. Flann will not marry Becfhola while he is in exile as a mercenary soldier, because that would be for her a poor exchange for the life of a queen. Cano's refusal is apparently for the same reason, not on account of any obligation to the king. But the obligation of honor is the motive in the case of Crimthann and also in the case of Mael Fíothartaig in *Fingal Róndin* (RC, XIII, 376, 386). It might be considered whether these stories have borrowed a motif from the story of Joseph (*Genesis*, chap. xxxix). The latter is similar to the Greek legend of Phaedra and Hippolytus, as Meyer pointed out in his edition. But I do not dispute Loth's general claim as to the Celtic origin of the conflict between passion and duty, so far as the medieval romances are concerned.

Edited by Meyer, *Anec.*, I, 1-15; translation, Thurneysen, *ZRP*, XLIII, 388-402. The numbers indicate the paragraphs of Thurneysen's translation.

1-4. Áedán, son of Gabrán, and Gartnán, his own son, were rivals for the kingdom of Scotland, so that half the men of Scotland fell in battle. Gartnán lived in the island of Skye in great splendor and comfort. A son was born to him, namely, Cano, son of Gartnán, and he sent the child away in fosterage. One winter's night Áedán attacked the island with two thousand men, and Gartnán and his people perished. Cano resolved to flee to Ireland and ordered boats to be built. With fifty warriors and their wives and fifty servants he sailed to Ireland.

5-10. At that time Diarmait and Bláthmac,

sons of Áed Sláine, were in Ulster enjoying their royal privilege of hospitality, and they received Cano with honor. But Áedán sent messengers with a great treasure of gold and silver that he had seized in Skye, offering it to the kings if they would kill Cano. Diarmait's daughter was in love with Cano on account of his fame, before she had seen him. She overheard the message of the Scots and warned Cano. Her warning is spoken in five quatrains, of which the meaning is veiled, but Cano understands. He goes before the kings, and Diarmait tells him that they would not sell his life though the whole house should be filled with treasure. Bláthmac follows him out and advises him to pursue the messengers and attack them as soon as they leave the territory and are no longer under the king's protection, and so recover his father's treasure. Cano does take them by surprise at sea, but lets them go unharmed, and Diarmait praises him; for it has been revealed to Diarmait that Cano's restraint will be rewarded. He will be king of Scotland after Áedán for twenty-four years.

11. Cano went across the Shannon into Connacht to visit Guaire, and came to the house of Marcán,¹⁰ whose wife was Cred, daughter of Guaire. She had loved Cano before he came to Ireland. Moreover, he had protected her home when he came with Diarmait to give battle to Guaire.¹¹ Cano sought the protection of Cred on his journey to the court of Guaire. Colcu, son of Marcán, intervened (the text is obscure here), and was repulsed by Cred, who declared her love for Cano.

12-15. Cano arrived at the court of Guaire at Derlus and was made welcome. He stayed for three months, and one-third of the dwelling was occupied by Guaire, one-third by Cano, and one-third by Senchán, *filí* to Guaire, and all the men of Ireland. (Here there is a digression into anecdotes about Senchán). Senchán

¹⁰ Marcán is king of Hy Many in the story of Cellach.

¹¹ This refers to the Battle of Carn Conaill, fought in 649; but there is no mention of the episode until now, and Cano does not figure in the versions of that story that have come down to us. It was in this battle that Dinertach was slain, and there is a beautiful lament for his death, attributed to Cred, daughter of Guaire (cf. *Ériu*, I, 15, and Meyer, *Ancient Irish poetry*, p. 63).

protested against the expense of so much hospitality. He and Guaire were a sufficient burden upon the Connachtmen. He contrived by magic to scatter Cano's men when they were out hunting, so that they could not find each other. They took leave of Guaire and announced that they were going into Munster to visit Illann, son of Scannlán. Guaire bade them to a last feast and summoned the nobles of Connacht to take leave of them. Cred and Marcán and Colcu came to the feast, and Cred asked Guaire to be allowed to pour out the wine for the men of Scotland and of Connacht that night. She put a sleep-charm upon all the company save herself and Cano.¹² She went to him and entreated him, but he would not be her lover so long as he was a mercenary soldier. If he should become king, he would come to fetch her, and she would be his wife always.¹³ He gave her a stone as a pledge that they would meet again. He said that his life was in the stone. When his mother was in childbed, she had seen in a dream two fairy women approach her. Then his life had come out of her mouth in the form of a stone, and she snatched it from the hand of one of the women. The woman said: "It is the life of thy son that thou hast held." His mother had preserved the stone until he was able to preserve it.

16. Cano went to Illann, son of Scannlán, and was made welcome. Illann promised that, though he had been sold for silver by the sons of Áed and left hungry by Guaire,¹⁴ he should lack nothing in Corco Laige. He asks the assurance of his people and of his wife that they will provide hospitality. His people promise three oxen, three salted pigs, and three vats of ale every evening, in addition to their regular tribute. His wife promises three herds of seven-score cows. Then Illann ventures to join his guests and promises that Cano and his followers will be welcome to stay with him until he becomes king of Scotland. They stay for three years without seeking entertainment elsewhere for a single night. A hundred and fifty loads of

wood were brought in each morning and evening, and Illann feared that his forests would be destroyed. Cano said that before the forests perished Illann himself would perish.

17. Then hostages from Scotland came to guarantee the kingdom to Cano (presumably announcing the death of Áedán). For two days there was general lamentation for Cano's departure, and then he set out. Illann foretold his own death within a year, and bestowed upon Cano fifty dark-gray horses, fifty copper cauldrons, and fifty harnesses.

18. A year from that day Illann was slain and his dwelling plundered by men of his own kindred. Cano was fishing from a boat upon the sea, and a wave of blood came into his boat. He stood up and clapped his hands in mourning. His lamentation is given in a poem of fourteen quatrains.

19-20. Then the Saxons, Britons, and Scots went with Cano to Corco Laige, and he slew the slayers of Illann and restored his dwelling and established his son as king and took hostages for the safety of the king. Thereafter he was in Scotland as king and remembered the hospitality of Illann.

21. He used to make a yearly tryst with Cred at Inber Colptha.¹⁵ Colcu, son of Marcán, was there each time with a hundred warriors. At last they made a tryst at Loch Creda in the north. She went northward bringing the stone with her. He came from the east so that they were already within sight of each other. Colcu¹⁶ came with three ships and wounded him, so that he escaped from the ship with difficulty. When Cred saw his face (covered with blood?), she shattered her head against a rock, and the stone broke as she fell. Cano died three days after he had gone east (to Scotland).¹⁷

"Those are the stories of Cano son of Gartnán and Cred daughter of Guaire."

The passage in "The wooing of Becfhola" which explains the meaning of Cano's

¹² So did Gráinne in "The pursuit of Diarmait and Gráinne."

¹³ So Flann in "The wooing of Becfhola."

¹⁴ This hardly implies an alternative tradition; it may be a part of Illann's boasting.

¹⁵ The mouth of the River Boyne.

¹⁶ Lit. "he comes," but Colcu is evidently meant.

¹⁷ His death is recorded in the *Annals of Tighe nach* (RC, XVII, 210; John O'Donovan, *Annals of the four masters* [Dublin: Hodges & Smith, 1851] [2d ed., 1856], anno 686).

refusal, misunderstood by Loth, occurs in *YBL*, 118b, lines 29–36 = O'Looney's edition, page 180, lines 3–9:

"Ceist" or sí, "cid ná hanimsea latsú?" "Is drochbanais duitsiu céus," or sesem, "anad limsa 7 rf Hérend do fhácbáil 7 beith duit for amsa 7 athchor¹⁸ im diaidsi." "Cid ná comraicim?" or sí. "Náthó don chur sa," ar sesem. "Mad limsa immorro ind inis 7 dia mairem, regatsa ar do chennso, 7 is tusu bithben bias im fharrad, 7 aireseo don chur sa."

"Why," said she, "may I not stay with thee?" "It were a poor marriage for thee indeed," said he, "to stay with me and leave the king of Ireland, and to be following me, a soldier in exile." "Why may we not lie together?" said she. "Not now," said he. "But if the island should be mine and if we live, I shall go to fetch thee and thou shalt be my wife and with me always. And now go."

The passage in the story of Cano occurs in Meyer's edition at page 10, lines 7–12:

Co tard-si bricht suain for in sluag co torchradar i(na) codlud acht sisi 7 Cana co tuidehid co [Cano?]¹⁹ co mbai forsin dergud ocaisseom oca thimgaire, coná²⁰ hetas uadsom airt nobeth i nn-amsa. Mad dia ngabad rigi immorro doregtha ara cend-si 7 is i bean no biad aiece caidche.

She laid a sleep-charm upon the host so that they all fell asleep except her and Cano. Then

¹⁸ *atepor*, MS. O'Beirne Crowe failed to emend the reading and rendered "and its vengeance to follow me," supposing a word *tepor*, 'vengeance,' which appears with a query in the recent fasciculus of the *Contributions to a dictionary of the Irish language* in course of publication by the Royal Irish Academy. He does not supply a variant reading here from H. 3. 18, so that the error may be common to both manuscripts, but the emendation is certain. For *athchor* in the sense of 'repudiation, expulsion, exile,' cf. *Tolluid Art do athch[hor] a leulad for Ailill*, "Art came to repudiate his children against Ailill" (*Anec.* II. 27. 15); *luid fo chéit[oir] d'athchur a charatraid for Coin Culaind*, "he went at once to denounce his friendship to Cú Chulainn" (*TBC.* 2184); *diachar feadhma, athchar éachta*, "abandonment of effort, renunciation of valor" (*CRR.* 88 z); or *macaibh Ruaidhri d'athchor uaidh*, "on condition that he should expel the sons of Ruaidhri" (*FM.* III. 228. 7). (I owe the references to the unpublished collections of the Royal Irish Academy.)

¹⁹ Lacuna in manuscript.

²⁰ *Conanan* (manuscript).

she came to Cano and was beside him on his bed entreating him, but she did not obtain it from him so long as he should be a mercenary soldier. But if he should obtain the kingdom, he would come²¹ to fetch her, and she was the wife that he would have always.

The two passages correspond closely, and it is plain that Cano's refusal is not occasioned by a sense of duty to the king whose hospitality he has accepted but by the sense of his unworthiness while he has no home to which he can bring a wife. The Egerton text reads: "*ar m'olcus do nuachar duitsi a haithle righ Erenn d'fhágbáil duit*," *ar int óclách*, "*ocus nach lium fén ant oilén*" ("for that I should make a bad husband for thee after the king of Ireland," said the warrior, "since the island is not mine") (*SG* I, 86, l. 28). The same idea appears in the story of Conall Core, edited from the Book of Leinster by Vernam Hull (*PMLA*, LVI [1941], 937–50). Feradach, king of the Picts, will not give his daughter to Conall while he is a mercenary in exile. The passage occurs in Hull's edition (p. 941, l. 16):

Ni tharddad dó immurgu ind ingen, ar asbert Feradach ní thibred a ingin do amus fa [athchor]²² anechtair.

But the girl was not given to him, for Feradach said that he would not give his daughter to a mercenary in exile from outside the country.

The notion was therefore a commonplace in these love-stories and familiar to hearers of the story of Cano, so that it required no explanation.

An interesting question arises from the comparison of the two parallel passages quoted above, with regard to the nature of the manuscript record. In the first ex-

²¹ Or "he would send"; the form is passive impersonal.

²² "Approximately six letters are here illegible" (ed.). I suggest that *athchor* is the missing word.

ample the dialogue is given in direct speech and makes a lively episode. In the second it is in reported speech, and much of the effect is lost. It seems to me that the second example was not intended to be recited as it was written and that a familiar scene, merely indicated in the transcript, would be recited at the discretion of the narrator, but probably in the form of the first example. If this is so, we must learn to distinguish in the early period between two types of record for the sagas, perhaps at different times or by different writers at the same time. And the theory has a wider application. Thurneysen pointed out (*Heldensage*, p. 60) that the oldest sagas consist of isolated short sentences, almost like mere notes, so that one might suppose that the narrative was expanded in its oral form. He rejected this supposition on the ground that even the early recension of *Táin Bó Cúalnge*, which is a long text, does not greatly differ in style from the oldest examples. The more I read of these early tales, the more I am inclined to doubt whether he was right. The story of the death of Fothath Canainne, edited by Vernam Hull (*ZCP*, XX, 401), makes only twenty-two lines and could hardly have been offered as entertainment in that form, unless, indeed, it be justified as a mere preface to the poem of which the first verse is quoted at the end; but the story entitled *De Gabáil int Šida* (*ZCP*, XIX, 55) is not longer. "The adventure of Concla the Fair" makes just two pages

of the edition of *Lebor na Huidre*. "The death of Afife's only son" is one hundred and eighteen lines in Meyer's edition (*Ériu*, I, 113). I think it is probable that the oldest texts are summaries of the matter of the story and that the form was given by the *fili* in actual performance and was his personal achievement. The later transcripts, then, first present the traditional form of the recitation.²³ Whether we should suppose that *Táin Bó Cúalnge* was recited in early times rather in the manner of the Book of Leinster than in that of the Book of the dun cow is doubtful. I am inclined to think so. It is certain, at least, that the tale was never recited as it stands in the Book of the dun cow and the Yellow book of Lecan, for the text is confessedly a compilation and often refers to "other books" or "an alternative tradition" (cf. Thurneysen, p. 101). The distaste that some critics feel for the ornamental style of the composer of the recension in the Book of Leinster (*ibid.*, p. 113) and of the story of Fer Diad (*ibid.*, p. 220) is perhaps due to the fact that the art of storytelling and the habit of listening to stories have been lost among cultivated people. The folktales one hears now recited by the fireside in Connemara may not be suitable for reading, but when heard from a competent storyteller they are often excellent entertainment.

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²³ Yet we find in "The death of Crimthann Mac Fidaig" (ed. Stokes, *RC*, XXIV, 174), which belongs in its extant form perhaps to the eleventh century, that a few passages are written in Latin.

FÉNIUS AND GÁEDEL IN THE *LEBAR CINDFÁELAD*

HOWARD MERONEY

THE Book of Kinnfoyle, called the *brollach*, 'prologue,' of the *Auraicept na n-éces*, consists of a preamble and two distinct tracts.¹ The second tract will not be analyzed here; it is a grammatical comparison of Gaelic and Latin, a few key sentences copiously expounded word by word. But the first tells a story thought by some poets, possibly even by Cindfáelad, not unworthy of verse, the invention of the Select Language by Fénius Farrsaid. Details of the fable, often newly elaborated, figure in the *Lebar gabála*, the *Senchas mór*, the annals, Keating's *History*, and many another repository of Irish legend. In the *Lebar Cindfáelad*, however, the Fénius narrative is so ill defined that we must remove an overgrowth of scribal commentary in order to disclose its hero's place in the *Auraicept* as a whole.

The validity of the preamble (ll. 68-78), hence the ascription of the tracts to Cindfáelad, has already been discredited. These lines once corresponded with a passage in the *Lebar Aicle*, associating Cindfáelad with the laws there entered.² The versions are in disagreement mainly about the victories at the Battle of Magh Rath; the *Auraicept* names four instead of three and garbles the reasons for calling

them victories. Here is a sentence from the preamble to the Book of Acaill: "ocus noca neda sin is búaid ann Suibni do dul ar geltacht acht ar fácaib do scélaib ocus do láidhib dia éis i nÉirind." Neither redaction of the *Auraicept* has it right; B reads: "et Suibni. i ngealtacht, acht is ar a mhéd du láidib duróni," and Y reads: "et Suiphne Geilt do dul for gealtacht ar médh do láidiph doróine." The errors, which could have arisen within the textual tradition of the *Auraicept*, indicate that the two preambles had a single source. It is unlikely that the original was composed for the *Auraicept*, which otherwise mentions Cindfáelad in statements open to suspicion as late work.³

Another circumstance enforces the disproof. In each manuscript of the *Auraicept* there is a differentiation of script, larger letters being used for what Calder reckons as older text. In lines 68-311 only the following phrases are printed in boldface: "Asberat trá augdair na nGáideal. . . . Co mbad si tugait in bérla Féni. . . . gním n-ingnad n-indligtheach. . . . Forcémnacair and [isin domun Y]. i. cumtach in túir Neamrúaidh." Now Calder was unaware, and Macalister did not notice, that some of these words are matched in the Old Irish paraphrase of Gen. 11:1, preserved in *Lebar gabála*, ¶83: "Is amlaid so adcémnacair sin dia ndernad gním n-ingnad n-indligteach isin domun an tan sin dorisi."⁴ Since the

¹ George Calder, *Auraicept na n-éces* (Edinburgh, 1917); cf. Thurneysen's long review, *ZfCP*, XVII (1927), 277-303. Calder prints two redactions: B 68-734, from the Book of Ballymote, and Y 2356-3492, from the Yellow book of Lecan (cited below only for important deviations). A study of the variants, esp. omissions, convinces me that MS E preserves an earlier recension.

² Cf. *Ancient laws of Ireland*, III, 86 ff.; see the *Catalogue of the Irish manuscripts in the British Museum*, I, ed. S. H. O'Grady (London, 1926), 107; and Roland M. Smith, "A prophecy ascribed to Cendfaelad," *RC*, XLVI (1929), 120.

³ In the trial preface (ll. 63-67), added after the sections of the *Auraicept* had been assembled; in the elucidation of *asberat* (ll. 80, 96); and in the list of notables (ll. 1019-27) (wanting in MS E), which is younger than the *Tréfol*.

⁴ R. A. S. Macalister, *Lebar gabála Éirenn* (Dublin, 1938); the text is cited by paragraph, the notes by volume and page.

phrase "gním n-ingnad n-indligteach" conforms with the inflated "rhetoric" of the Genesis fragment, yet has no counterpart in the style of the *Auraicept*, the point of origin was probably the biblical rendering. Unable to believe that this paraphrase dates from the seventh century, I question whether Cindfáelad wrote the very passage which the *Auraicept* scribes cite and magnify as his.

Since this does away with the supposedly basic text of the first tract, we must look elsewhere for primitive matter.⁵ Obviously glossarial are lines 79-99, explaining the tense of *asberat*, and 101-3, commenting on *ingnad* and *indligtheach*. Then follows, with intermittent additions, a straightforward narrative:

Lines 105-18: No monarch ruled before Nin, but Nimrod, champion of the descendants of Adam, gained supremacy over the seventy-two counselors, whom he organized for the building of the Tower.

[Lines 119-36: Peleg's genealogy (Y 2413, adding data from the *Sex aetates mundi*). The interpolator complains that his *scribenda* (cf. *LG*, Poem V, ll. 225 ff.) name only seventeen nobler counselors. He tries to straighten out the problem of kingship raised in ll. 107-9 and to explain why the Tower is named for Nimrod.]

Lines 136-71: Reasons for erecting the Tower; the King of Heaven speaks, and the builders confuse the words for sticks and stones.⁶ Long afterward, poets come from Scythia to learn the many tongues which they think will be preserved at the site of the Tower; they go to the plain of Shinar [*i. mag nUcna*, etc., is glossarial]. There are seventy-five

poets, one man for each language plus three sages in the *primbérta* (Hebrew, Greek, and Latin); Fénius, their leader, was learned in the *primbérta* before leaving Scythia.⁷ Finding no perfection of languages at the Tower, however, Fénius disperses his school to learn the tongues of all lands; he supplies the poets with food and clothing,⁸ remaining at the Tower until they return.

[Lines 172-74: "And he was teaching the many tribes of the earth during that time"; this remark, omitted in Y, seems prompted by a quotation from the Book of Amairgin (cf. ll. 1041-42).]

[Lines 175-88: Jumbled genealogical notes on Fénius: ll. 175-80 object to a claim of descent from Ionan (= Iavan?) and should follow l. 188 if Eogain be meant. But ll. 181-88 have no fixed place, being differently entered in Y 2465 ff.]

[Lines 188-92: Speculations about *bérta* *nÉbraidí* and *Gortigern* (MS L), augmented in Y 2433-35, 2491-2504.]

Lines 192-201: The disciples return and, having displayed their learning, ask Fénius to select a language for themselves alone; whereupon he devises *in bérta tóbaide*, "the chosen tongue."

Here the narrative breaks off, and what may be called a supplement next provides odds and ends of information wanting in the original but quotable at times from other sections of the *Auraicept*:

Lines 202-9: An etymology of *Gáedeal* (cf. Y 3376, 3540) is combined with notes on *Gáedel* from the Book of Amairgin (cf. ll. 1048 ff.).

Lines 209-12: A second list of the idioms connected with *bérta tóbaide*, repeating most of lines 198-201.

⁷ Since Fénius qualifies as both poet and sage, only seventy-four languages are represented, but the original is no doubt seen in BB 300 a 34, where twenty-four languages are derived from each of the *primbérta*. The remark on the *primbérta*, that they were used in the inscription on the Cross (omitted in Y), is also found in the unpublished commentary, BB 300 § 40.

⁸ Calder did not repair a textual error at this point: *i cen* (l. 169) and *secht mbérta* (read *mbliadna*) (l. 170) belong together as parts of an intrusive marginal comment.

⁵ Calder ignored the commentary in the Book of Ballymote, 299 a 30-301 § 23, corresponding to the Yellow book of Lecan, 217 a 1-219 a 22; since this text is unavailable in print, a few passages will be cited from the Ballymote facsimile (= BB).

⁶ For the three causes of the building of the Tower see BB 14 a 44. Regarding Jehovah's words, cf. *LG*, § 3, and the notes thereto (I, 205); in my present opinion, contrary to Macalister's, the *Auraicept* passage comes from *LG*. The confusion of *cloch* and *crand* is less confusing, to us at any rate, if *crand* be taken as an early misreading of *criaid* (cf. Gen. 11:3).

Lines 212-14: A passage improving on lines 156 ff. For the first clause cf. lines 1102 ff. in the Book of Fénius; for the Latin see Macalister's note (*LG*, I, 267).

Lines 215-28: A list of the seventy-two tribes unnamed in lines 123 ff.

Lines 228-43: Two borrowings from the Book of Amairgin, cross-reference being indicated by "conid desin asbeir-som (this) i curp libair." Applicable to lines 170 and 194, they explain how Fénius' disciples chose countries in which to study, and supply dates (cf. ll. 1036-41, 3992-97).

Lines 243-52: Names of the twenty-five more noble poets in the school of Fénius, arranged in the order of the ogham alphabet. "Others say this alphabet was invented in Achaidh [cf. l. 1105], and that Amairgin [cf. l. 1028] invented the ogham alphabet." The expression *asberail araili* implies that the commentator did not originate the Books of Fénius and of Amairgin.

Lines 253-55: A stray quatrain, dealing with ogham but otherwise having no affinity to the rest.

Lines 255-60: A resumption of line 250 (and so ordered in Y at l. 2565), further connecting ogham with Fénius (cf. ll. 1139-40).

Lines 261-92: Prose based on the verse, cataloguing various ways in which the number 72 figures at the Tower (cf. ll. 1242, 4024).

Lines 293-99: "Others say" the Tower had nine ingredients rather than the seventy-two of lines 284-87; prose based on the quatrain, which is repeated in Y 2448-51 (cf. B 148) at a better place.

Lines 300-311: An attempt to couple the eight parts of speech with these nine ingredients (cf. *BB* 300 a 25: "ocht n-adhbair Nemhrúaidh"); omitted in Y at this point, and repeated in B at lines 317-27.

The fragmentary, annotative quality of these remarks, which betray an interest in Gaelic, sets them off from the underlying account, which is devoted to the *bérta Féni*. The contrast in subject matter, reflecting a rivalry between Fénius and Gáedel, we are now prepared to study at closer range.

More than a technical treatise on

grammar and prosody, the "scholars' primer" furnished the *fili* with arguments for the vernacular against the classical learning of the *fir léind*.⁹ Suggesting also a bias against the lawyers of the *scól féinechais*, a consistent feature of the *Auraicept* is the name *Gáedelg*, rather than *bérta Féni*, for the language whose superiority is extolled. Thus the Book of Amairgin, drawn in part from the *Leabar Cindfélad*, demonstrates that Gaelic is broader than Latin in letters, words, and meanings; but the terms *féinechas* and *bérta Féni* are ignored or misunderstood. Effective in the opinion of all schools must have seemed a proof from history which made the eponymous heroes of Ireland coeval with the ancient worthies of the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. One notes an effort, e.g., in the preface to the *Senchas mór*, to sanctify the brehon law by pretending that Cai Cáinbrethach acquired it from Moses.¹⁰ In this contest, despite the prominence which the *Auraicept* gives to Gaelic as a language, Fénius Farrsaid surpasses Gáedel in personal success. The dispute is sometimes sharper than the logic. One commentator, hostile toward the Greeks, argues that Grecus mac Gomer was not present at the building of the Tower, since the *Cóumainsirad* proves Grecus was not the son of Gomer (cf. Y 4031-33, wanting in B); and another student of the synchronisms, denying the primacy of Latin, shows that Latinus, too, could not have been there. The last passage (ll. 1119-28) is copied from *Leabar gabála*, ¶17, where it accompanies a similar denial regarding Fénius.¹¹ A scribe of the *Auraicept*, forewarned or

⁹ Hence its importance as a document in the rise of modern philology. Bergin's complaint at the unscientific character of the work appreciates too little the authors' polemic intent (see "The Native Irish grammarian," *Proc. Brit. Acad.*, 1938, p. 207).

¹⁰ Cf. *Ancient laws of Ireland*, I, 20.

¹¹ Macalister's note (*LG*, I, 222) refers to the wrong passage (l. 126) of the *Auraicept* for Latinus mac Puln.

otherwise prejudiced, omits Fénius from his proposed list of seven chieftains at the Tower, naming only Éber, Grecus, Laitin, Riabath Scot, Nemrúad, and Faillech (ll. 1249–53, cf. ll. 1116–19). Nevertheless, the redactor in MS H of *Lebar gabála*, ¶ 136, is not deterred from expanding the catalogue to eight, viz., Failleac, Éber, Grecus, Laidin, Riphath Scot .i. Fénius Farrsaid (!), Cai Cáinbrethach, Gáedel mac Éithéoir, and Neamrúad. In the *Auraicept na n-éces* no partisan of Gáedel has thought to raise him to this eminence.

In trying to settle on a culture-hero for Gaelic, the authors were troubled by the appearance of three Gáedels in their sourcebooks. Gáedel Glas, son of Néil, is a latecomer, admitted only into the version of YBL, whose redactor has picked up the story of Scota ingen Foraind and the stanza beginning "Féine ó Fénius atbertai" (cf. ll. 2523–25, 2997–99, 4058–61); but the scribe of B has found a quatrain about "Béllat máthair Nfuiil" (ll. 801–4), which MS E does not possess. The Fénius-Gáedel material in the *Auraicept* thus lags behind traditions already established in the poem "Canam bunadas na nGáedel," attributed to Maelmura Othna († 887).¹² A different Gáedel Glas is said to be the son of "Agnoin no Aingin mac senbráthar athar do Fénius" (l. 205); the passage looks like a re-working of lines 1048 ff. in the Book of Amairgin, where the writer tries to unite Gáedel mac Angin and Gáedel mac Éithéoir by saying that Gáedel's father had two names. This solution persuades the Y-redactor to write "Gáidel mac Éithéoir no mac Aingin" (l. 4137), where B is content with the first patronym. Still un-

syncretized, however, these two Gáedels appear among the heroes credited in lines 1019–27 with the invention and refinement of the alphabet. Gáedel mac Angin, says the tract *Do bhunadhaibh na rémend* (ll. 1759 ff.; cf. also LG, ¶ 90), "requested the selection of Gaelic" by Fénius; and Gáedel mac Éithéoir, according to the general introduction to the *Auraicept*, shared with Sachab mac Rochemhuroos in the discovery of Gaelic, although "others say" that Gáedel alone first wrote it in a place called *Calcensis*.¹³ Now the "Book of Fénius" is the short title of "in libhair (uraiciopta Y) far Fénius 7 far nFair mac Néma 7 far nGáedel mac Éithuir," who devised it "after the delivery of the law by Moses and after study by Cai Cáinbrethach with him."¹⁴ Keating is puzzled by the presence of four names, quoting from the Cin Droma Snechta a quatrain that lists Fénius, Gáedel, and Íar as the three sages, and from another source a similar stanza naming Fénius, Gáedel, and Cai.¹⁵ We should hardly look for a system in these matters when the texts show few signs of straight thinking, but the devious course of pretense is not untraceable.

The analysis of the tract attributed to Cindfáelad yielded a core of text in which Fénius is the sole linguistic patriarch. The three sages in the *primbérta* (l. 157) would implicitly be Éber, Grecus, and Latinus; flaws in the chronology, however, soon opened the way for intruders. No language is called after Cai, but through association with the laws he must have gained early access to the legend in the

¹² The *Auraicept* often appeals to final authority *lasin Gáedel* (compare *la Féni* in the laws), and Y 2961 adds specifically *mac Éithuir*.

¹³ See ll. 4143–44; I translate the Y-version, having been made wary by B's omission of (*in*) *rechta* at l. 1108.

¹⁴ Geoffrey Keating, *The history of Ireland*, II, ed. P. S. Dinneen (London, 1908), 6–8.

¹⁵ The Irish version of Nennius, ed. Todd (Dublin, 1848), pp. 220 ff. This observation vitilates van Hamel's argument on the age of the Fénius fable (*Zfcp*, X [1914], 123 ff.) and justifies Thurneysen's warning (*Zfcp*, X [1914], p. 392): "Ferner wäre das zeitliche Verhältnis des LG zu *Auraicept* klarzulegen, von dem van Hamel nicht spricht." The relationship is still unclear.

Auraicept.¹⁶ The interpolator of lines 81–83 says the *ugdair na nGáedheal* were Féníus Fairsaid and Íar mac Néma, who are elsewhere linked in some mischievous gossip,¹⁷ and the pairing of their names goes back to the *bérta tóbaide*.

The aim of the pseudo-Cindfáelad story is manifest in its conclusion: *bérta Féni* is identified as a gathered or selected language. Thus the closing words state that Féníus invented for his school “in *bérta tóbaidhí cona fortórmaigib* i. *bérta Féni* [Y here repeats (!) ‘*cona fortórm-(acht)aiph*’] 7 *íarmbérta* 7 *a mbérta n-edarscartha* . . . 7 *bérta na filed* . . . 7 *a ngnáthbérta*” (“the chosen tongue with its ‘superadditions,’ i.e., the speech of the Féni, and ‘afterspeech,’ and the ‘separated speech,’ etc.”). This passage no reviser of the *Auraicept* comprehends. It is repeated almost immediately (ll. 209–12) without the important phrase *cona fortórmaigib*, and, while copying off the list, the scribe begins to count five species of *bérta tóbaide*. More corruption follows.

Recognizing that the Féníus tract stops short, someone has composed an essay on the *cóic gné in bérta tóbaidhí*; his work, however, becoming detached from the Cindfáelad materials during the compilation of the *Auraicept*, now interrupts the discussion of rhyme in the Book of Féníus (B 1302–38, Y 4619–52).¹⁸ Here the “five species” are miscounted as “*bérta Féine* 7 *fasaighe* [fasaige na filed B] 7 *íarmbérta* 7 *béurla n-etarsgarta* 7 *bérta forteide na*

bfiled.”¹⁹ In Y, *bérta Féine* is glossed vaguely as “in Féinechus no araile *bérta robui ag Féníus*” (“Fenechas or another language Féníus knew”).²⁰ The word *fasaigh* Y interprets as *fis óghai na bfiled*, “poets’ knowledge of perfection,” adding i. *dhiged fírfurtacht*, “[sc. poets’] rule of true improvement”; as illustrations we are given two metrical devices cribbed from the *Tréfocal*.²¹ *Íarmbérta* is not made any clearer by the remarks on *ballorb* and *muirni*, but the writer lists some irrelevant examples of *íarmbérta*, ‘adverb,’ and two etymological speculations. Now B skips over *bérta Féni* and *fasaige*; or, rather, he puts Y’s illustrations of the latter under *íarmbérta*, where they are pointless, and lets the rest go. Both redactions, however, agree about *bérta n-edarsgarta*, which they claim is a separation of vowels, as in *rói oiss* and *ros*. They also agree on *bérta na filed*: a mysterious sentence is borrowed from the *Lebar gabála*, and then from the law-tracts comes a snippet on *brimon smitrach*.²² Here the painful fatuities should end, but a subsequent editor sees at least the worst mistake: although five kinds of *bérta tóbaide* have been dealt with, the fifth ought to be *in gnáthbérta*, ‘the common speech.’ Showing how poorly these men knew their

¹⁹ Again I follow the Y-text, since B shifts *íarmbérta* out of position to bridge a gap in its commentary. The *Lecan* glossary, § 209, omits *íarmbérta* and *bérta na filed* but obtains five items by placing *Gaeidalg* at the head of the list and counting *bérta teibide* (cf. *AfcP*, I [1898], 54). Note that Keating (II, 10) in yet another way misnames the “parts of Gaelic.”

²⁰ Cf. *isín Féinech* (no *isín Breatnais*), B 633, where Y 3508 takes the gloss but drops the lemma. Uncertainty about *bérta Féni* is typical of the *Auraicept*: at l. 24 of B the apparent lacuna shows that a gloss i. *Gaeidalg*, preserved in Y 2508, was distasteful at least to someone (cf. also the gloss at B 100); and at B 1034 the *a mbérta-sa* stands in contrast with the *in béurla Féine* of Y 3989. In the list at BB 300 β 2 *bérta Féni* is also displaced by *Gaeidalg*.

²¹ Compare ll. 5351–61 (*lorga fuach*) and 5362–69 (*díalt n-éarlemmi*); the compiler of the Book of Féníus is grimly determined to lodge these strangers in the *Auraicept* (cf. ll. 1591–1608 and 1692–94).

²² For *Etailt aro*, etc., cf. *LG*, II, 137; and for *brimon smitrach* cf. *ZfcP*, XXI (1939), 324–29.

¹⁶ Cal first enters the *Auraicept* in the Book of Amáirgin, ll. 1038–41 (omit Y, which is here corrupt); the text is then imported into the *Lebar Cindfáelad* at ll. 232–35.

¹⁷ Cf. R. Thurneysen, “Das Gedicht der vierzig Fragen von Eochaid ua Cérin,” *ZfcP*, XIII (1919), 130–36. Regarding Bélait, the wife of Féníus, see also Margaret C. Dobbs, “The Ban-Shenchas,” *RC*, XLVII (1930), 290.

¹⁸ Neither redaction gives a satisfactory arrangement. There are two important omissions (of ll. 1313–16 and 1336–38) in MS E. Selections from the treatise were published by Thurneysen (*RC*, XIII [1892], 267–74) and Stokes (*AfcP*, III [1906], 247–48).

business, the correction reads, "others say that the *fasaigi* of the poets is the *bérta Féni*, and that it [i.e., *fasaigi*] is not another language at all" (ll. 1336-38, omit MS E). Surely, the blunder deserves a truer improvement. The troublesome word *fasaige*, perhaps taken by some scribes to mean 'legal precedents,' should never have been treated as a language, though not for the reason alleged. Instead, Y's spelling *fasoighe* is correct, and it means 'outgrowths, offshoots,' plural of *fásóg* (cf. *fásán*, and *fás*, 'growth').²³ The word is synonymous with (*for*)*tórmach*, and these are the idioms which the poets added (cf. *inné rothórmachtatar filid* [l. 21]). Returning to the last words of the Fénius story, we see that the text there must once have read: "in *bérta tóbaidhi cona fortórmaigib .i. bérta Féni 7 fásóige na filed .i. íarmbérta 7 a mbérta n-edarscartha*," etc.

The information in this little treatise, a tardy and futile attempt to piece out the *Lebar Cindféalad*, cannot, therefore, be taken seriously. But an annotator inserts one bit of guesswork that illuminates our problem: By what may be an unwitting inversion of the truth, he suggests in lines 1314-16 (omit MS E) that *íarmbérta* was named for *íar mac Néma*.²⁴ Since *íar* is not the eponym of a class or clan, since his genealogy is meager and his accomplishment unique, my own guess would be that he was created to obtain for *íarmbérta* a progenitor ranking next to the Fénius of *bérta Féni*. Then Gáedel must have entered the legend after the meaning of the *bérta tóbaidhe* had become obscure; and Gaelic itself, at first not even included among the subspecies, was

afterward, by a bold pre-emption, entitled the "chosen tongue."²⁵

The last stroke, however, is too much for the versifier of the stanzas beginning "In *bérta tebidi tric*" (ll. 2283-98, wanting in B at this point; but cf. *BB*, 17 β 18). The poem, which the scribe of Y could have found in the *Lebar gabála*,²⁶ presents yet another late tradition about the chosen tongue, whose true name, says the poet, few men know. Ignorant and unwise people call it "Gaelic," but it has no more relation to Gáedel than to any "illustrious hero" (*ealg oirdeirc*, a jibe at the etymology in l. 204). There are, rather, four tuneless names:

Ticolad a hÉbrad aird
Is Malot a Greig glégaire,
Legulus a Laitin le,
Tinóltach fir a F[e]ine.

"Ticolad" in lofty Hebrew,
And "Malot" in bright-rough Greek,
"Legulus" likewise in Latin,
True "Tinóltach" in *bérta Féni*.

Macalister's attempted exposure of this hoax should be consulted.²⁷ Though in debt to his translation, I interpret differently the *Lebar gabála* readings *ara féine*, *are féne*, and so on, which he renders as "among its people," as if for *fine*; but the spellings and the parallel proper nouns point to *Féine*. The poet's Fenian sympathies are just beneath the surface, and he admits only that Gáedel "improved" (*roleasoig*) the Select Language. But his successors in prose blindly disregard his meaning: the *Auraicept* introduces the poem by saying that Gaelic, from Gáedel, is the proper name of the chosen tongue; and the summary in *Lebar gabála*, ¶ 142, insists that Gáedel "cut it out" (*rodostoba*).

²³ See Dinneen, *Irish-English dictionary* (Dublin, 1927), s.v. "fás." Calder's translation of *fasach* as "commentary" is erroneous (cf. Thurneysen, *ZfCP*, XVII [1927], 289).

²⁴ Cf. Osborn Bergin, *Irish grammatical tracts* (Supplement to *Ériu* [Dublin, 1915 et seq.]), p. 4: "Íar mac Néma ro láoi íarmbérta san nGáoidhlig" [i.e., *íarmbérta*, 'adverb'].

²⁵ The Book of Amaigin introduces Gáedel, and the writer of the general preface first makes the claim for Gaelic (ll. 9-13).

²⁶ Cf. *Lebar gabála*, Poem XVI, ll. 627-46; for the prose, see ¶¶ 107 and 142.

²⁷ *LG*, II, 142. Alliteration vindicates the Egerton manuscript's reading *fir*.

Macalister claims that each of the words *Ticolad*, *Malot*, *Legulus*, and *Tinóltach* signifies 'gathering'; especially noteworthy is the derivation of *Moloth*, the *Leabar gabála* spelling, from *συλλογή*.²⁸ The Irish *Tinóltach*, based on *tinólaím*, 'collect,' is more suitable in such a context and would be better translated as 'selected,' than *tóbaide*, literally, 'cut out, epitomized,' from OIr. *to-fo-ben-*. A metaphorical use of *tóbaim*, *teibim*, is thus assumed in the translation "chosen tongue" for *bérta tóbaide*. MacNeill called it "the eclectic language" and thought to discern its beginnings in the attempt of early Old Irish glossators "to assign Hebrew, Greek, and Latin origins for Irish words."²⁹ Without accepting it as the initial motive, I am reluctant to dismiss such an influence in later times. Although adopted by poets and glossators, the *bérta tóbaide* was applied first to the *fénechas* of the lawyers; to clarify this circumstance, along with the superadditions of the poets, an explanation may be near at hand. Rather than eclectic, the *bérta tóbaide* was, I fancy, "dialectic," whose root meaning appears in *διαλέγω*, 'pick out,' and whose prestige in the law courts of antiquity everyone will recall. The pretended "additions" were, to begin with, glosses or definitions of dialectic: *bérta n-éarscartha* is *disputatio*, the *ars disserendi*; and *gnúth-bérta* means 'the common idiom, ἡ διάλεκτος.' The term *iarnbérta*, properly 'epilogue,' can have referred as well to a syllogistic conclusion; that it should be *iarnbérta*, from its hardness like iron, is a conceit not altogether playful.³⁰ The *bérta na*

filid is simply *ars poetica*, found with dialectic in sundry handbooks *de disciplinis*.³¹

Now the first Cindféalad tract does not proclaim that the *bérta tóbaide* is supreme over all others, but the *Auraicept* several times praises Gaelic *ara forleithi seach gach mbéscna* (cf. ll. 6, 12, 26, 33, 35). It may be, as I have suggested, that the authors were actuated chiefly by pride of nation or of party and were excited further, perhaps, by the etymology of Latin *a latitudine* (cf. ll. 355, 2725). The word *béscna* in the phrase has a peculiar ring, however, as if its applicability in such a sense had been forgotten; the scribe of B wishes to replace it with *bérta* (cf. B 7, Y 2270) and pens a marginal gloss to insure against misunderstanding. We wonder, then, whether the original term was *béscna tóbaide*; and giving point to our curiosity is an OIr. gloss: "acht it na huili bésgna atá fíra per dialecticam" ("but all the disciplines are true *per dialecticam*").³² Meyer's *Contributions* (s.v.) show that the word *béscna* has usages both legal and philosophical. One commentator in the *Auraicept na n-éces* knows the danger of "worldly arts" (*béscna domunda*, l. 46), and voices a warning against "the whole of philosophy, including grammar, dialectic (*dileachtaigh*), and mathematics" (ll. 51-52). Upon these clues rests a final suspicion that the doctrine of the supremacy of Gaelic owes something to Plato's conviction that dialectic is the highest science.

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²⁸ Cf. *Micil* = "Sicily" (*LG*, ¶ 209); see Macalister's note (II, 255), which is inconclusive in view of *Sicilia* = *Seitlig Mhichil* "Greater Skellig" (cf. *ZefP*, XIII [1921], 315, n. 3).

²⁹ Eoin MacNeill, "De origine Scoticae linguae," *Ériu*, XI (1932), 117. He suggests, too, that *Fénus* was invented as an eponym of the *bérta Féni*.

³⁰ Cf. ll. 1313-14, wanting in MS E. The passage seems to me untrustworthy; consult, however, the

entry *iarn-bérta* in *Heasena irishes Lezikon* and the literature cited there.

³¹ Note the efforts, e.g., in the poem *Ceithri randa rdáiter dé* (*LG*, Poem XV, ll. 607-20), to farce up a Gaelic program aping the seven arts.

³² Cf. *Thesaurus palaeohibernicus*, II, 7, l. 26; compare also *fellsam roglic in gach béscna*, cited by Meyer, *Contributions to Irish lexicography*, p. 208.

THE MIDDLE IRISH APOCRYPHAL ACCOUNT OF "THE SEVENTEEN MIRACLES AT CHRIST'S BIRTH"

VERNAM HULL

THERE exist in Middle Irish two entirely independent accounts of the various miracles that took place on the occasion of Christ's birth. One account is only in prose with the title "Mirbuli gheni in t-Slainiceda" ("Miracles at the Savior's birth"),¹ whereas the other is both in prose and in verse but without title, although from the nature of its contents it may be conveniently called "The seventeen miracles at Christ's birth." As hitherto this account never has been edited, an edition based on all the manuscripts is given here. For that purpose the manuscripts containing the prose account may be listed as follows:

1. LB = Leabhar breac, a manuscript written before 1411, now in the Royal Irish Academy, p. 132, col. b, l. 55-p. 133, col. b, l. 14.²

2. Eg = Egerton 1781, a manuscript written between 1484 and 1487, now in the British Museum, p. 152, col. a, l. 8-p. 153, col. a, l. 35.³

3. P = 24. P. 25, a manuscript written in part⁴ between 1513 and 1514, now in the Royal Irish Academy, p. 43, col. b, l. 26-p. 44, col. a, l. 22.

4. BF = the Book of Fermoy, a manuscript written in the fifteenth century, now in

the Royal Irish Academy, p. 95, col. b, l. 18-p. 96, col. a, l. 1.⁵

5. LFF = Liber Flavus Fergusiorum, a manuscript written in the first half of the fifteenth century, now in the Royal Irish Academy, fol. 11^v, col. b, l. 35-fol. 12^r, col. a, l. 9.⁶

In addition to the five preceding manuscripts in which copies in prose of this text are found, two other manuscripts also preserve a versified version of these seventeen miracles. The two are:

1. YBL = the Yellow book of Lecan, a manuscript written in the last decade of the fourteenth century, now in Trinity College, Dublin, p. 170, col. a, ll. 16-43.⁷

2. UM = the Book of Uí Máine (Hy Many), a manuscript written previous to 1372, now in the Royal Irish Academy, fol. 116^v, col. b, l. 36-fol. 117^r, col. a, l. 13.⁸

As might be expected, this versified version forms an independent unit, which is in no way related to what precedes or what follows in either manuscript. On the other hand, the prose version in all

⁵ The numbering of the pages in the actual manuscript itself is given. Unfortunately, the lower margins of the Book of Fermoy have been injured; consequently, portions of the last three miracles no longer are legible.

⁶ A prose version of the sixteenth miracle likewise occurs in *Tenga Bithnua* ("The evernew tongue"), ed. Whitley Stokes, sec. 57, *Ériu*, II (1905), 118-120. Furthermore, in MS Egerton 92 of the British Museum, p. 42, col. a, ll. 27 ff., there is a description of a rectangular ingot of gold that appeared in Arabia *is in lou iar ngenemain Crist* ("on the day after Christ's birth"). Since, however, this ingot did not appear on the night of Christ's birth but thereafter, it obviously does not belong to the present collection of *mirabilia*.

⁷ This is the pagination of the facsimile edition. Because of the war it has been impossible to collate the facsimile, which is not always too legible, with the actual manuscript itself.

⁸ Printed but not translated by Kuno Meyer in *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, V (1904), 24-25.

¹ An unpublished version occurs in MS Celt. I of the Bibliothèque nationale at Paris, fol. 16^r, col. b, ll. 9 ff. This version is much fuller than the version published by Edmund Hogan from LB in *The Irish Nennius from L. na Huidre* ("Royal Irish Academy, Todd lecture series," Vol. VI [Dublin, 1895]), pp. 50-52.

² Cited according to the facsimile edition, from which the text has been transcribed.

³ The pagination of the manuscript here is followed.

⁴ In this section of the manuscript a copy of "The seventeen miracles at Christ's birth" is preserved.

the manuscripts except LFF is incorporated into a larger whole, the "Irish Gospel history,"⁹ which, in turn, is part of a general Bible history. According to Dr. Robin Flower,¹⁰ the "Gospel history" is based largely on Eusebius' *Historia ecclesiastica* and on the *Pseudo-Matthaei evangelium*, but much material has been added from other sources. Among such other sources, Dr. Flower cites the twentieth section in the sixth book of Paulus Orosius' *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII*, which, in his opinion, furnished the "theme" for the Irish account of the seventeen miracles.¹¹ Granted that Orosius may have provided the "theme," it nevertheless is difficult to believe that, subsequent to him, the subject was not further developed and amplified before it received its characteristic Irish treatment. For Orosius mentions only three portents announcing the advent of Christ; these portents take place at Rome—not at Jerusalem; and, with the possible exception of the second portent, not one of them bears the least resemblance to the miracles enumerated in the Irish text, as may be seen by the following summary of Orosius' portents:

1. A circle resembling a rainbow formed around the sun's disk. This circle was seen at Rome in the reign of the Emperor Caesar Augustus on January 6.

2. A spring of oil from an inn flowed at Rome throughout the entire day.

3. The Emperor Caesar Augustus caused the gates of Janus at Rome to be closed for the first time in two hundred years.

The foregoing summary of Orosius' three portents clearly indicates the extent to which at a later period the "theme" was re-worked and conflated. What,

however, were the intermediary stages, if any, still requires investigation. Nor should such an investigation be confined purely to Christian materials; it should include, as well, the vast body of rabbinical lore which arose in the Middle Ages; for, improbable as the statement at first may seem, it is by no means certain that all the Irish miracles are Christian in origin. The sixteenth miracle, for example, also occurs in *Tenga bithnua* ("The evernew tongue"),¹² a work which apparently owes some of its inspiration to the Talmud.¹³ If, therefore, the Talmud exerted an influence on "The evernew tongue," it is not unreasonable to suppose that one or more of the Irish *mirabilia* may be derived indirectly from that source; indeed, the indebtedness of medieval Irish culture to the Near East is a subject that demands a careful study in order to determine how much actual transmission, especially in matters appertaining to the church, really took place.

Almost as uncertain as the source or sources is the date at which this text was composed. Even to establish an approximate date is extremely difficult in this case, on account of the paucity of literary and linguistic data; in fact, all that can be said with certainty is that the *terminus a quo* must be posterior to 1000, since the language of the document is not Old Irish, whereas the *terminus ad quem* must be anterior to 1372, since the scribe of UM died in that year.¹⁴ With respect to the intervening span of time during which these miracles consequently were written, it is impossible to be precise in the matter of the dating. For that purpose the linguistic criteria are insufficient. Yet,

⁹ Hogan, *Irish Nennius*, pp. 38 ff. Hogan, however, leaves out the beginning of the "Gospel history" in LB.

¹⁰ *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1926), II, 534-37.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 536.

¹² *Loc. cit.*

¹³ According to Professor Osborn Bergin in an oral communication made to me some years ago.

¹⁴ See Kuno Meyer, "Neue Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften," *Archiv für celtische Lexikographie*, II (1903), 139.

despite their insufficiency, they at least suggest the probable century of composition. Among them is the retention of the *u* in *retlu* (LB) for later *a*, although in Middle Irish it must be admitted that there arises considerable fluctuation in the orthography of final unaccented vowels. Another and more significant criterion is the survival of the infix *s* in *ros·gab* (LB); for, in spite of subsequent sporadic occurrences,¹⁵ infixes tend to be replaced by independent pronominal forms about 1250. A third criterion is the preservation of the termination *-sat* in *ro·ansat* (Eg) and in *ro·molsat* (LB), for which the corresponding deponential ending *-satar* is substituted at approximately the same period; indeed, *ro·molsadur* actually is recorded in the versified version where it is required by the meter, so that the versified version presumably is later than the prose version. To these criteria also may be added the fact that there occur several deuterotonic verbs, such as *do·dechaid* (LB), *at·bera(i)t* (LB), and *at·cess* (LB); in the course of time, at all events, prototonic verbal forms are increasingly substituted. If, therefore, the foregoing evidence—slender though it may be—is weighed carefully, it leads to the conclusion that the present text was composed about the beginning of the thirteenth century and possibly even somewhat earlier.

Easier to determine than the date of composition is the filiation of the manuscripts which comprise this text. With regard to LB and Eg, comparison at once shows that if Eg is not a copy of LB, as Dr. Flower suggests,¹⁶ then at least it derives from an exemplar that is common

to both manuscripts. For the number and the sequence of the miracles are identical in both; in neither is there a significant divergence from the other in the wording. Although, at first, P and BF seem to have a different descent from that of LB and Eg, they nevertheless belong to the same branch of the stemma. Their principal difference consists in omitting some of the *mirabilia*.¹⁷ In the general arrangement of the material, as well as in the phraseology, however, they exhibit no striking departures¹⁸ from the norm as represented by LB and by Eg; furthermore, they agree with these two manuscripts in mentioning specifically seventeen miracles as the number which occurred on the night of Christ's birth. Obviously, therefore, P and BF, together with LB and Eg, form a genetic group.

What relationship, then, does LFF, as well as the versified version in YBL and in UM, have to this genetic group? Though LFF is an inferior manuscript abounding in errors, it is noteworthy in several respects. For one thing, LFF alone of all the manuscripts lists the number of miracles as sixteen and describes every one of them, whereas in the other manuscripts the number given is always seventeen but no more than sixteen are ever described. For another, LFF records various miracles for which there exist no parallels in LB, Eg, P, and BF. For a third, the style of LFF differs markedly from that of the genetic group; indeed, it is so unembellished and so concise that, in contrast to the style of the genetic group, it produces almost the effect of a *présis* or of a summary. On

¹⁵ As late as 1532, for instance, Manus O'Donnell still employs a few infix pronouns; but, according to his editors, they may be attributed to his sources (cf. A. O'Kelleher and G. Schoepperle, *Betha Colaim chille: Life of Columcille* [Urbana, Ill., 1918], p. xlviii).

¹⁶ P. 534.

¹⁷ There are twelve miracles in P and nine in BF, but the numbering of the miracles in BF clearly proves that omissions were made. The fourth miracle in the manuscript, for instance, is referred to as the seventh, which is the corresponding miracle in LB and in Eg.

¹⁸ Unless, perhaps, the transposition of the eleventh and the twelfth miracle of LB and of Eg by P and by BF may be so termed.

account of the foregoing reasons, LFF may be said to represent a separate recension, to which, moreover, also belongs, in part, the versified version. Not only does it present the miracles in an order closely resembling that in LFF, but what is more important is that it includes those miracles which are found solely in this manuscript. Yet it stands in sharp contrast to LFF in one vital matter: Like all the other manuscripts, it asserts that there are seventeen miracles¹⁹—not sixteen, as in LFF. In view of this situation the versified version must descend from a fusion or amalgam of two recensions—one represented by LFF, the other by LB, Eg, P, and BF.

The fact that there are apparently two distinct recensions, as well as a fusion of these recensions, has led to the following method of presenting the textual material: For the prose, LB is made the basic text of the genetic group, but the important variant readings from Eg are cited in the notes. As P and BF leave out some of the miracles and therefore are comparatively short, they are printed separately, although not translated because in the main their wording is the same as that of LB. In this way it will be easier to compare them with LB than if, like Eg, they were relegated to the notes. Obviously, LFF as the sole representative of one recension must be given in full with a translation. As for the poetry, the versified version—represent-

ing, as it does, a fused product of the two recensions—deserves likewise a separate treatment. Of the two surviving manuscripts containing this versified version, YBL is preferred to UM, not because it is a better manuscript—in fact, UM sometimes provides a superior text—but because YBL is at least as good as UM and, besides, has never been published heretofore; however, the significant variant forms of UM are recorded in the critical apparatus. In order to facilitate comparison, the miracles in LB are numbered from one to sixteen; then the same number as in LB is employed for the corresponding miracle in the other versions, regardless of its actual position in the manuscript. On the other hand, cross-references are used for those miracles which occur only in LFF and in the versified version. Thus "YBL" in the margin of LFF indicates that the miracle is also in the versified version, where at the appropriate place the symbol "LFF" will be found. All manuscript contractions except those capable of more than one resolution are expanded without the use of italics; additions both to the texts and to the translations are put in brackets; and the punctuation is made to accord with modern practice.

In the preparation of this article the writer has obtained assistance from various scholars; in particular, to Professors Myles Dillon, Roger S. Loomis, C. R. Morey, and Homer A. Watt does he wish to express his appreciation for their generous aid.

¹⁹ Actually, however, it gives an account of only fifteen miracles.

TEXTS

A. PROSE

I

(LB, p. 132, col. b, l. 55-p. 133, col. b, l. 14 collated with Eg, p. 152, col. a, l. 8-p. 153, col. a, l. 35)

Do secht n-ingantaib dée in domain in adaig ro-genir Crist indister budesta.

In ocht Kalainn Enair ro-genir, bat 5 ile mirbuile 7 inganta in domain uli in adaig sin.

1. Isin aidche sin frith in fínemain apaid fo lán-torad i n-Ierusalem.

2. Isin aidche sin fos frith in pailm 10 co firinnech cona blath gel-chorcra forri.

3. Isin aidche sin frith XII deis do glan-cruitnecht i n-oirthir muigi na Bethile.

15 4. Isin aidche sin ro-mebutar XIII [tobair] a muigib 7 a mi[n]-redib na Bethile.

5. Isin aidche cetna frith cech glas 7 cech gemel 7 cech foriata 7 cech 20 tempul oslaicthe i n-oenur uili in aidche sin.

6. Isin aidche sin at-cess soillse adbul etiachtaige do thidecht i templuib in domain uli in aidche sin 25 7 nír sölisi cech tempul dib hi ngrein tesbaig samruta ina in adaig sin.

7. In VII ingnad .i. lucht na cathrach uli do thoduscad a suan 7 asa 30 cotlad co-tarfas doib in rig-tech cendtarach do beth lan do retlannaib

4. ocht] ochtmadh Eg. ro-genir] ro-ghenair Crist Eg. bat ile] batar uile Eg. 9. fos] om. Eg. 10. co firinnech] om. Eg. 13. do glan-cruitnecht] do cruitnechta glana Eg. muigi] om. Eg. 16. XIII [tobair]] ceithri tobair disceidheca Eg. mi[n]-redib] min-reidhibh Eg. 20. oslaicthe] oslaice Eg. 22. Isin aidche sin at-cess] An VI ingnad .i. Eg. 23. etiachtaige] eitochtaighe Eg. 25. nír sölisi] nír t-sölisi Eg. dib] om. Eg. 26. ina] om. Eg. 29. uli] om. Eg. a] asa Eg. 31. cend-

rigda ro-sölisi comba solus in doman uli o thurebail grene co fuined.

8. In VIII ingnad .i. senistri 35 doirsi thempuil moir Ierusalem do os-lucud a n-oenur uli in adaig sin.

9. In IXmad ingnad .i. noidin na Bethile do labra a mbroind a maithrech 7 noidin beca batar for cfeh 40 co-mbatar uli oc molad in Duileaman.

10. In Xad ingnad .i. topar ffrusci do maidm i tír Israel in bail na-roibe topar remi 7 marit na h-inganta sin beos. 45

11. In XI [ingnad] .i. ni-roibe mag na gort hi tír fuda narbo lan do scothaib tened corcra fo mil 7 fo mín-torad uli in oidche sin.

12. In XII ingnad .i. ro-slanaiged lucht cecha tédma .i. daill 7 baccaig 50 7 buidir 7 cloim 7 crithgallraig 7 na huli thédmann. Ro-slánaig uli iat in adaig sin.

13. In XIII [ingnad] .i. in redla rigda do breith eolais dona druidib tancutar la hascadaib do Crist.i. ór 7 túiss 7 mirr. Iespar, Melcisar, Balcísar a n-anmanna na ndruid 55 sin. Is ed tra ro-tuiced asna hascadaib sin .i. ór ara rigdacht (is aire tuctha); túis ara dhiadacht; mírr ara doennacht. Is hi tra in retlu rigda 60

tarach] cennartach Eg. 32. comba solus] 7. ba soillsi tra Eg. 33. thurebail] turgabail Eg. 34. ingnad .i. senistri] inguadh .i. lucht na cathrach .i. seinistri Eg. 35. doirsi thempuil] doirsi an tempuil Eg. 38. labra] labairt Eg. 40. in Duileaman] Crist Eg. 43. in bail na-roibe] i bail nach-roibhi Eg. 44. remi] roime riam Eg. 46. In XI [ingnad]] An t-oenmad inguadh dec Eg. 48. corcra] corcra Eg. 50. ro-slanaiged] ro-slanaidhe Eg. 51. 7 baccaig] om. Eg. 53. Ro-slánaig] ro-slanaidhedh Eg. 55. In XIII [ingnad]] An XIII inguadh Eg. 56. dona druidib] dona tri draidhibh Eg. 57. do] docum Eg. 58. Iespar, Melcisar, Balcísar] Melcisar, Iespar, Balcísar Eg. 59. a n-anmanna na ndruid sin] om. Eg. 60. Is ed tra] 7 is ed Eg. 62. tuctha]

- sin tue eolus dona drúidib-si o thír
- 65 Arabía 7 o airthur dhomain co tír Íuda 7 co Bethil cusin tech i-mbúi Crist hi crú in assain 7 in óe-dhoim. Melcisár dino is e thuc in ór .i. óclach side liath urmoel ossinech. Ba samul-
- 70 ta fri senoír ar óeis. Balcisar do-rat in túis. Oclach side foltach dub co n-ulchain fótaí fair. Iespár tra tue in mírr. Oclach amulchach e side ar ba hé a n-ossar.
- 75 In tan tra rancutar cu dorus in tige a-mboi Crist, do-dechaid Melcísar in sindser isin tech 7 airisit in dias ele allamuig don dorus co-táirsed dia sinnser prostrait 7 a
- 80 ascuda uli do ídpairt. Ar iss *ed* ba bés aco-sum do-gres .i. úmla dia sinnseraib. Is *ed* ro-ráid Iespár in óssar ann-sin:
- “A Mo Dé Uli-Chumachtaig,”
- 85 *olse*,” is amra in rath dontí ata ina sinser indíu oldáim-ne ar is é it-chífe in slánfeid ar túis.” In [tan] tra it-*chuala* Crist inní-sin, ro-soad delb in t-sindser forin óssar conid é
- 90 it-connaire Ísu *for* túis 7 ro-ídpair a ascada dó ria cách 7 ba do *cél-mírbuilib* Crist in-sin.

14. In XIII [ingnad] .i. na cethra 7 na hanmunna indligthecha do

tucadh Eg. 64. *dona drúidib-si* dona trí droeithibh Eg. 65. 7 o airthur dhomain] om. Eg. 66. *cusin tech i-mbúi Crist hi crú in assain* 7 gusan tech i-rolbhi Crist 7 a cro an asail Eg. 68. *Melcisár dino is e thuc in ór .i.*] Melcisár is e do-rat ant or Eg. 69. *liath urmoel ossinech*] ulchach liath urmoel Eg. 70. *ar óeis*] ara aols he Eg. *Balcísar do-rat*] Balcísar is e do-rat Eg. 71. *foltach*] co folt ndubh 7 Eg. 72. *Iespár tra tue*] Iespár is e do-rat Eg. 73. *ar ba hé a n-ossar*] 7 ba he a sosar Eg. 76. *a-mboi*] a-rolbhi Eg. *Melcisár*] Melcisár Eg. 77. *airisit*] ro-ansat Eg. 78. *don dorus*] do dorus an tíghe Eg. 79. *prostrait* 7 a ascuda] in asgadh Eg. 80. *do*] dia Eg. *iss ed*] is *ed* sin Eg. 81. *úmla*] umla 7 onoir do thabairt Eg. 82. *Is ed*] Occus is *ed* Eg. in óssar ann-sin] in sosar an tan sin Eg. 85. *amra*] mor Eg. *dontí ata*] do nech beth Eg. 86. *oldáim-ne*] oldas beth 'na sosar Eg. *it-chífe*] do-chíthfe Eg. 87. In [tan] tra it-*chuala*] An tan trath atcualaidh Eg. 89. *óssar*] sosar Eg. 8] é sin Eg. 90. *for*] ar Eg. 92. *Crist in-sin*] foillsichthea sin do Ísu Crist Eg. 93. In XIII [ingnad]] An XIII ingnadh Eg. 96. a nduilleman]

- 95 thoduscad asa suan 7 asa cotlud co-mbatar oc molad a nduilleman hi fiadnaise na slog 7 is *ed* at-bertis mar oen fri hainglib nime: “Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus Dominus, Deus
- 100 Sabaoth.” In tan tra is iat na hanmunna indligthecha cen tuicsi ro-molsat in slánfeid, ba cóir dona dóinib cé no-betís choideche oca molad cen fairisim.

- 105 15. In XV [ingnad] .i. uli ecaide na Bethile itir drúí 7 ecaide noe-maib batár triana cotlud ac molad Crist 7 oc taircetul a eca (p. 133, col. b) 7 a mór-mirbúiled comba
- 110 hingnad abdul la cách uli inní-sin.

16. In XVI [ingnad] amal indisit na staraige co-tarla mil mor for traig mara Cúcaist in oidehe sin .i. Semena a ainm-sium. Ba dífasnesi dermaír a
- 115 met ar boi L fer a forairdib a chind 7 head radaire itir cech da fír díf. Is é sin mét do thalmáin ros-gab in míl sin. Batár dino L for CCC adarc asa chind 7 ol L ar C in cech adaire dib
- 120 side. Ocus marait na blaith 7 na benna sin beos i tigib dóined mór isna tírib arail. At-berait na scribenna in tan boi in míl sin oc ée coro-muidetar teora srotha asa bragait .i. sruth for-
- 125 derg fína 7 sruth ola 7 sruth derg-óir.

Crist Eg. 97. *na slog*] na slogh 7 luchta na cathrach ba comfóg dolbh Eg. 98. *mar oen fri hainglib nime*] iaramh Eg. 100. *tra*] umorro UM. 101. *cen tuicsi*] cen tu uicsi LB; can cheill can tuicsin Eg. 102. *ro-molsat*] ro-molsat ro-molsat LB; ro-molsat Eg. 103. *cé no-betís choideche oca molad cen fairisim*] cenobetis beo can chodladh caidhe oca mholadh can sear can airisim Eg. 105. In XV [ingnad] .i.] An V ingnadh dec Eg. 106. *itir drúí 7 ecaide noe-maib batár*] itir draidhibh 7 ecaidhi dibh diadhaibh ro-batar Eg. 108. *a eca* 7 a mór-mirbúiled] a geine 7 a eca 7 a mor-mirbúiledh Eg. 110. *abdul la cách uli*] mor la cách Eg. 111. In XVI [ingnad]] An VI ingnadh dec Eg. 112. *na staraige*] sdaraidh na ecaigi Eg. *traig*] tracht Eg. 114. *ainm-sium*] ainm Eg. *Ba dífasnesi*] Ba hanba 7 ba dífasnaisidh Eg. 115. *ar boi L fer a forairdib*] uair ro-boi L fer ar forairdibh Eg. 117. *ros-gab*] do-ghabh Eg. 119. *dib side*] dibh Eg. 121. *dóined*] doine Eg. *isna tírib*] is' tírchibh Eg. 124. *teora*] trí Eg. 125. *sruth ola 7 sruth derg-óir*] sruth alainn ola 7 sruth delidech derg-óir Eg.

II

(P, p. 43, col. b, l. 26-p. 44, col. a, l. 22)

Do VII n-ingantaib déc na Beithili 7 an domain in aidchi na geni Coimdetá and-so.

I n-oichtmad Kalainn Enair go hairighe ro-geined Crist. Batar dano il-mirbuili 7 inganta isin doman uili in aitheí sin.

1. Is and 'san aidchi sin tra frith in finemain abaid fo lán-torad a n-Irusalem.

2. Is and 'san aidheí-si frith an pailm 7 a blath gel corera uirre.

3. Is and 'san aidheí-si dano frith da déis déc degh-abuid do glan-cruithnecht a n-oirthir na Beithili.

4. Is and 'san aidheí sin umorro do meabatar ceithrí tobair derrsguighetea a maighib na Beithile.

5. An aidheí sin dano gach glas 7 gach tempall 7 gach tech foriata do-fosluigset uatha fein uili.

6. In sesed ingnad .i. soillsi adbal do techt a tempall mor Šoluim narbo soillsi medon lai glan-šolais glan-šamraid.

7. In sectmad ingnad lucht na cathrach uili do mosglad asa suan codalta co-tarfas doib in righ-nem cenntarach do beith lán do reltannuib uili 7 ba solus in doman o turgbail greini go fuined uatha.

8. (p. 44, col. a) An t-oichtmad ingnad .i. doirsi 7 fenistre tempuill moir Irusalem d'fagail osluicthe iarna marach.

10. In naomad ingnad .i. tobar fir-uisci do maidm i tír Israel an t-inad nach-raibi tobar riam roime 7 mairid fos.

12. In X ingnad .i. ro-slanaiged lucht gacha galair 7 gach hesslainti .i. daill 7 baceaig 7 claim 7 crithgalair.

11. In t-aonmad ingnad déc .i. nach-raibe mag na gort a tír Iuda narbo lan do sgothaib cend-corera fo mil uili in aidheí sin iad.

16. In dara hingnad déc indisit na sdaruige co-tarla mil mor for tracht mara

Caisp 7 ba Séma a ainm 7 ba hanabuid dano 7 ba dermair difaisnesi a delb 7 a med .i. caoga fer do cur cend a cind 7 fead radaire eitir gach diss dib; in oired no-gebdís a suili sin don talmuin is ed ro-gab in míl mor sin. Do-batar L ar trib cétuib adarc fair 7 ól L ar C no-teighed in gach adaire 7 mairit fos araill dib sin. Aderaid umorro na sgribinda in tan do-bi an míl mor sin ag eg coru-muigset tri srotha asa bhraguit .i. sruth fina degmeasca 7 sruth oir ghloin 7 sruth ola.

III

(BF, p. 95, col. b, l. 18-p. 96, col. a, l. 1)

Do secht n-ingantaib déc an domain oidheche geine Crist indister fodesta.

A n-oicht Kalaind Enair ro-geinir 7 ro-batar umorro na huili mirbal 7 ingnad in domain uile an oidheche sin.

1. 7 isin oidheche sin frith in finemain abaid a n-Iarusalem.

3. Isin oidheche sin frith da deis déc do glan-cruithnecht a n-oirthir na Beithile.

5. 7 isan oidheche sin frith gach glas 7 gach geimel 7 gach foriaghadh 7 gach teagh 7 gach tempal do-batar a n-aen-uair oscailte.

7. In VIImadh ingnad .i. lucht na cathrach uili do duscadh asa suan codalta a n-aen-echt co-tarfas doib an righ-teach cenntarach lan do reltannaib uile 7 ba soillside an domun uile o turgabail co fuinedh.

8. An t-oichtmadh ingnad: fuinneoga 7 doirrsi an tempail moir a n-Iarusalen d'oslagad a n-aen-uair.

10. An noimadh ingnad .i. topar fir-uisci do maidm a tír Israel a fáil nach-roib uisci riam roime 7 mairidh ann fos.

12. An Xmad ingnad .i. ro-slanaighidh gach uili galar 7 tedma .i. daill 7 baceaigh 7 claim 7 crithgalraigh. Ro-slanaigh[ed] uile iat an oidheche sin.

11. In t-aenmad ingnad dée [ni-r]oibe magh na gort a tir Iuda nar lan [d]o [sco]-thogaib cenn-corera an oidhche sin.

16. A [n ing]nad dée innisit na staire .i. co-tarla mil for tracht mara co Cuais. Semma a [ainm. . . .] anba diairme a met .i. L fer do 7 fedh radhaire etir gach fer d[ib] ar tri célt adharc asa 7 mairit (p. 96, col. a) sruth fina 7 sruth ola 7 sruth oír.

IV

(LFF, fol. 11^v, col. b, l. 35-fol. 12^r, col. a, l. 9)

Se hinganta X do-badar oithchi geinidh Crist.

1. An céad ingnadh dibh: Frith fineamuin fo lan-torad a n-Iarusalem isin geimhreadh.

5. In t-ingnadh tanaisdi .i. gach glas 7 gach combhla d'osgludh 'na n-aenur i mBeithil Iuda in aidhe sin.

4. In t-ingnadh treas: Ceithri tobuir déag do maidhm a talmhuin na Beithili. Blas fina forro.

2. In IIII hingnadh: In phailm mo blath isin geimhreadh i n-Iaruslem.

YBL. In V hingnadh: Do-soillseadh Iaruslem a meadhon na haidchi.

YBL. In VI hingnadh: Reltanna neimhi ac soillsiugadh teampuill Iaruslem narba ecin su sudarla na lochrann ann

conaidh na haidhchi sin 7 curub ecin riamh roimhe sin.

12. In VII hingnad: Crist d'furitín each galair in aidchi sin idir cloimhi 7 lubra 7 bacadh.

8. In VIII ingnad: Seinisdir 7 doirsi an tempuill ac failtiugudh 7 ac foslugudh 'na aenur.

9. In IX ingnad: Naidine na Beithili gach neoch do-bi a mbroinn a mathar 7 na naedhin do-bi ar eich do-bidar uili ac moladh Crist an aidci sin.

10. In X ingnad: Tobur a n-Iaruslem do maidhm ar fud tiri Isarhel an oidci sin.

YBL. In t-aenmad ingnad dec: Duscadh caid asa suan an trath rugadh.

11. In dara hingnad (fol. 12^r) déag: Na sgatha fo mil ar fud tiri Isarathel.

3. In tres ingnad X: Da deis X lanabaidh d'aghbail a tiri Beithili Iuda an aidci sin.

16. In IIII hingnad X: Mil mor do-cur muir Torrian fo thracht Mara Hen, 7 muidhi tri srotha asa bel .i. sruth loma 7 sruth ola 7 sruth fina 7 L adharc ro-baidh fair 7 ol L ar C oclach in gach adhuire dibh.

13. In V ingnad X: In relta ac tobairt eoluis doib dona draithuibh a hiarthar an domuin cosin teach a-roibhi Crist.

14. In VI ingnad X: Na ceathra ac buirfeadhaidh 7 ac adhmoladh Mic De trena teangthuibh fein in oidhchi sin.

B. POETRY

(YBL, p. 170, col. a, ll. 16-43, collated with UM, fol. 116^v, col. b, l. 36-fol.

117^r, col. a, l. 13)

An n-aidchi geni Crist chain
Secht n-inganta dec domain.
Is aibind innister daib
Isin t-óiscel iar n-Ebraib.

5 1. Rob ingnad a ngemred ger
Finemain fo torad tren

4. *Isin t-óiscel*] 'san t-óiscela UM. 5. *a ngemred*] 'san gemrudh UM. 7. *Dar'gened*] dar' gein UM.

Dar'gened Crist, arcara, arcend,
Dar' slanaig Iarusalem.

5. Ingnad aili a mBethil bain
Aidchi geni Crist comlain:
Cach glas iata is each teg
'Na n-aenar ac osrucad.

4. Cethri tobair dec do-la
Do maidm tre thalmain toga

8. *Dar'slanaig Iarusalem*] da-rala i n-Iarusalem UM. 10. *comlain*] comlain UM. 11. *is*] 7 YBL; *is* UM. *teg*] teagh UM. 12. *'Na n-aenar ac osrucad*]

- | | | | |
|------|--|-----|---|
| 15 | I tir Bèthili cen bron.
Cia do-neath acht Dia Dimor? | 40 | In n-aidehi geni Crist cain
A mBethil buadaig ball-glain. |
| 2. | D'Iarusalem nirbo gnath
Pailm i ngemred co lan-blath; | 10. | Rob ingnad le each in gnim,
Ocus gerb ingnad rob fir:
In tobur usqui do maidm
I tir Israheil acgairb. |
| 3. | Da des déc lan-aipghe a-le | | |
| 20 | Frith a n-airther Bethile. | 45 | LFF. Is duscad caig asa suan
Mar rucad in Ri Ro-buan;
11. Ocus na scotha fo mil
I tir Iuda in aidehi sin. |
| LFF. | Ba solus in grian ar sin
A medon na haidehi sin—
Suairc in scel, ni-tairrsig trell—
Dar' soillsigh Iarusalem. | | |
| 25 | Ocus in tentigi tall
Cona rig-bruithin retland, | 50 | 13. An retla resna druidib
A hairther domain duilig
Tuc eolas daib cusin tech
A-roibi Crist co cindtech. |
| LFF. | Nirb eicen is' tempall tair
Adnad soillsi a sudarlaib. | | |
| 8. | Senestri is doirrsi ar sin | 15. | Cach egnaid domannnda dur
A mBethil o mur do mur—
Mad ail buide regrad sin—
In egna do an aidehi sin. |
| 30 | In tempall cona glasaib
Ic failti ria Crist cen col
Ro-foslaigsed 'na n-aenur. | 55 | Gid uasal each aidehi and
Is uaisli an aideche ad-beram:
Mac De—dena reir an fir—
Do-genair an aidehi sin. |
| 12. | Ro-ic Crist in uair do-cin
Cach galar fuair i mBethil: | 60 | Finid. Amen. |
| 35 | Claime is lubra maille
Daill is budri, baeaiig. | | |
| 9. | Mac a mbroind is mac ar cich
Ro-molsadur in t-Airdri | | |

da oslaiccad 'na haenar UM. 16. *Cia do-neath*] ce ro-neith UM. 17. *D'Iarusalem nirbo*] Don Iarusalem nir UM. 18. *co*] fo UM. 19. *des déc lan-aipghe a-le*] deis dech lan-aipchi de UM. 21. *ar*] lar UM. 23. *ni-tairrsig*] nir-toirrsi UM. 24. *Dar' soillsigh*] gor t-soillsi UM. 25. *tentigi*] teindtidhi UM. 26. *rig-bruithin*] rig-ruith in UM. 27. *is*] 'sa UM. 28. *Adnad*] adrad UM. 29. *ar*] lar UM. 30. *tempall*] team-pull UM. 32. *Ro-foslaigsed 'na n-aenur*] ro-oslaicit 'na n-aenur UM. 33. *in uair do-cin*] in n-uair ro-gein

UM. 34. *i mBethil*] 'san Beithil UM. 35. *is*] 7 YBL, UM. 36. *Daill is*] doilli UM. 38. *t-Airdri*] t-Ardrig UM. 40. *ball-glain*] ban-gil UM. 41. *le each in gnim*] re gach n-ingnadh UM. 43. *do maidm*] ro-maidm UM. 44. *I*] a UM. 46. *Mar*] tan UM. 51. *Ri*] Rig UM. 48. *in*] inn UM. 50. *hairther*] hiarthur UM. 51. *cusin*] isan UM. 55. *buide regrad*] bid e a freagra UM. 56. *In egna do an aidehi sin*] a egna do indisin UM. 58. *Is uaisle an aideche ad-beram*] uaisle in sinn agald aderam UM. 59. *dena*] denaidh UM. 60. *Do-genair an*] ro-geinr inn UM. *sin*] sin. Aidehi YBL: sin. In n-aidehi geine UM. 61. *Finid. Amen*] om. UM.

TRANSLATIONS

A. PROSE

I

Now are related¹ the seventeen miracles of the world the night that Christ was born.

The eighth day before the Calends of January on which He² was born, many³

¹ Lit., 'is related of.'

² Eg: "Christ."

³ Eg: "were all."

were³ the marvels and the miracles of the whole world that night.

1. On that night was found in Jerusalem a ripe vineyard in full fruit.

2. On that night, too, was found a palm, in truth, with a bright purple bloom upon it.

3. On that night were found twelve ears of pure corn⁴ in the eastern part of the plain of Bethlehem.

4. On that night fourteen wells⁵ sprang up out of the plains and out of the smooth level grounds of Bethlehem.

5. On the same night every lock and every fetter and every thing inclosed and every temple was found opened all alone.⁶

6. On that night an intolerably⁷ vast⁷ light was seen⁸ coming into the temples of the whole world, and not was more luminous each of the temples⁹ in the sun of the summer's heat than on that night.

7. The seventh miracle was¹⁰ that all the citizens¹¹ awakened from sleep and from¹² slumber, and was manifested to them that the royal abode on the hither side¹³ was full of princely stars of exceed-

ing brightness so that the whole world was illumined¹⁴ from sunrise to sunset.

8. The eighth miracle was¹⁵ that the windows and the doors of the great temple of Jerusalem opened all alone that night.

9. The ninth miracle was¹⁶ that the [unborn] infants of Bethlehem spoke in the womb of their mothers as well as the little infants who were being suckled,¹⁷ and they all were praising the Creator.¹⁸

10. The tenth miracle was¹⁶ that a well of spring water sprang up in the land of Israel where there had not been a well before,¹⁹ and these miracles²⁰ still abide.

11. The eleventh miracle was¹⁶ that there was not in the land of Judea a plain or a field which was not full of fiery purple²¹ blossoms all [laden] with honey and with delicate fruit that night.

12. The twelfth miracle was¹⁶ that the people of every disease—the blind,²² the lame, the deaf, the leprous, the palsied—and all diseases were healed. That night all were healed.²³

13. The thirteenth miracle was²⁴ that a royal star gave guidance to the Magi,²⁵ who came to Christ with gifts, even gold and frankincense and myrrh. The²⁶ names

⁴ In Eg, *cruithnechta glana* apparently represents the substitution of the acc. pl. for the dat. pl.; in Oir one expects *cruithnechtaib glanaib*.

⁵ Eg: "four hidden (?) wells." Neither the meaning nor the expansion of *discridecha* in Eg is certain. In the manuscript this word is actually written *dicd*, but above the last three letters are *s*, *i*, and *c*. Corresponding to *discridecha*, MS 24. P. 25 (II, 4) has *derraguigthecha*, the pl. of *der(r)guigthech*, 'distinguished, eminent,' with which, however, *discridech*—in form, at all events—can hardly be connected. In *Sanas Cormaic*, sec. 408 (ed. Kuno Meyer, *Anecdota from Irish manuscripts*, IV [1912], 34), *log disre(i)tech* glosses Latin *discretus locus*, which seems to signify 'a hiding place' (cf. J. O'Donovan and W. Stokes, *Sanas Chormaic* [Calcutta, 1868], p. 51). If, therefore, *discridech* may be identified with *disre(i)tech*, then perhaps it means here 'hidden.'

⁶ The Irish text adds "that night" after "alone," just as it does after "world" in the ensuing miracle. This tautological phrase is purposely omitted in the English translation.

⁷ Lit., 'vast [and] intolerable.' For *etiachtaige*, Eg has *eicetachtaige*, 'irregular.'

⁸ In place of "on that night . . . was seen," Eg reads: "the sixth miracle, namely. . . ."

⁹ Lit., 'each temple of them.'

¹⁰ Lit., 'that is.'

¹¹ Lit., 'people of the city.' Presumably Jerusalem is meant.

¹² Lit., 'from their.'

¹³ Apparently the reference is to this world as distinguished from the heavenly kingdom.

¹⁴ Eg: "and then the whole world was light."

¹⁵ Lit., 'that is.' In Eg, *lucht na cathrach* has inadvertently been inserted from the preceding miracle.

¹⁶ Lit., 'that is.'

¹⁷ Lit., 'who were on the teat.'

¹⁸ Eg: "Christ."

¹⁹ Eg: "ever before."

²⁰ The plural is strange but is confirmed by the reading of Eg; it seems to refer to this miracle as well as to the preceding miracles.

²¹ Lit., 'of purple fire.'

²² After "the blind" and the ensuing substantivized adjectives the Irish text employs the symbol 7 for the conj. *ocus*, 'and,' which has been left untranslated.

²³ Emend *ro-sldnaig* to *ro-sldnaiged*, for which compare *ro-sldnaidhedh* in Eg. Probably the scribe of LB failed to observe the bar of suspension over the *g* in his source.

²⁴ Lit., 'that is.'

²⁵ Eg: "to the three Magi."

²⁶ Lit., 'their.'

of these Magi [were] Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Now this is what was understood by these gifts:²⁴ gold on account of His royalty (for that reason it was brought²⁷); frankincense on account of His divinity; myrrh on account of His humanity. It is indeed that royal star which gave guidance to these Magi²⁵ from the land of Arabia and from the eastern part of the world to the land of Judea and to Bethlehem to the house wherein Christ was in the stall of the ass²⁸ and of the young ox. Melchior then it is who brought²⁹ the gold. He³⁰ [was] a gray-haired man³¹ with a bald forehead³² and with high temples.³³ Comparable to an elder he was, on account of age.³⁴ Balthasar gave the frankincense. He [was] a hairy black man³⁵ with a long beard on him. Now Gaspar brought the myrrh. He was a beardless man, for he was their junior.

When, then, they arrived at the door of the house wherein Christ was, Melchior the senior came into the house, and the other two tarried outside of the door in order that their senior might terminate

prostrating himself and offering all his gifts.³⁶ For this was always a custom with them: obeisance to their elders.³⁷ Then Gaspar the junior spoke thus:

"Oh³⁸ Almighty God," he said, "marvelous³⁹ today is the grace for that one who is older⁴⁰ than we are,⁴¹ for it is he who first shall see the Savior." When, then, Christ heard that, he converted the figure of the junior into that of the senior,⁴² so that it is he who first saw Christ and offered to Him before everyone else his gifts; and that was among the first miracles of Christ.⁴³

14. The fourteenth miracle was⁴⁴ that the quadrupeds and the irrational (?) creatures awakened from their sleep and from their slumber, so that they were praising their Creator in the presence of the hosts,⁴⁵ and as one with the angels of heaven⁴⁶ they were saying thus:

"Holy Holy Holy Lord, God of Hosts."

When, then,⁴⁷ it is the irrational (?) creatures without understanding⁴⁸ who praised

²⁷ In Eg, *tucadh* is the older and more correct form, but in Mlr *tuctha* occurs beside *tucad* for the pret. pass. 3d sing., probably because of confusion with the corresponding impf. ind. pass. ending (cf. G. Dottin, *Manuel d'irlandais moyen* [Paris, 1913], I, 152).

²⁸ Eg: "and to the house wherein Christ was and in the stall of the ass."

²⁹ Eg: "gave."

³⁰ Lit., 'that is, he.'

³¹ Usually *delach* signifies 'a young man, a warrior.'

³² *Urmoel* can mean either 'very bald' or 'bald in front.' The medieval icons of Melchior, however, clearly show that the latter meaning is here intended. Compare Welsh *arfoel*, 'bald.'

³³ Formerly *ossinech* was translated by 'fawnlike' or by 'fawn-colored,' as if it were the adjective to *uissín*, 'a fawn' but it seems to be rather a derivative of *uissín*(e), 'temple (of the head)' (cf. Maud Joynt, *Contributions to a dictionary of the Irish language, N-O-P* [Dublin and London, n.d.], col. 166). This derivation is supported by the iconography of the Middle Ages, for Melchior and St. Paul, who also is said to be "ossinech," are depicted as having high temples. Eg omits *ossinech*; instead, it has *ulchach*, 'bearded.'

³⁴ Eg: "on account of his age."

³⁵ Eg: "a man with black hair."

³⁶ Lit., 'in order that it might come to an end to their senior prostration and all his gifts to offering.'

³⁷ Eg: "to give obeisance and honor to their elders."

³⁸ Lit., 'Oh my.'

³⁹ Eg: "great."

⁴⁰ Lit., 'in his senior.'

⁴¹ Eg: "for any one being in his senior than being in his junior."

⁴² Lit., 'the figure of the senior was turned on the junior.' For *t-sindser*, read *t-sindsir*.

⁴³ Eg: "that were manifested by Jesus Christ."

For *foillsichthea*, the manuscript has *foillsh*, with a *c* above the *s* and with a bar of suspension over the *h*, which may be resolved in various ways. In so late a text one expects *ro-foillsichthea*, for which compare *ro-foillsigthea* in R. Atkinson, *The passions and the homilies from Leabhar breac* (Dublin, 1887), p. 275, l. 8421.

⁴⁴ Lit., 'that is.'

⁴⁵ Eg: "so that they were praising Christ in the presence of the hosts and of the citizens who were near to them."

⁴⁶ In lieu of "as one with the angels of heaven," Eg has "thereupon."

⁴⁷ Eg: "however."

⁴⁸ In LB, *tu* comes at the end of one line in the manuscript, whereas *uisci* is the first word in the next line. Obviously, the scribe intended to write *tuisci* or

the Savior, it were fitting for men that they should be glorifying Him always without ceasing.⁴⁹

15. The fifteenth miracle was⁵⁰ that all the sages of Bethlehem, both pagan priests⁵¹ and holy⁵² wise men,⁵³ were extolling Christ in their sleep and were prophesying His wisdom and His great miracles,⁵⁴ so that in the opinion of every one that was a mighty⁵⁵ miracle.

16. The sixteenth miracle, as the historians⁵⁶ relate, was⁵⁷ that a whale happened [to come] that night on the shore⁵⁸ of the Caucasian Sea.⁵⁹ Its name [was] Semena.⁵⁹ Indescribably⁶⁰ vast was its size, for fifty men were on the upper parts⁶¹ of its head, and [there was] the

limit of vision between each two of them. Such is the amount of ground which that animal occupied. From its head, moreover, three hundred and fifty horns were [protruding], and [there was] drink for one hundred and fifty in every horn of them. And the . . .⁶² and these horns still abide in the houses of great men in other lands. When that animal was dying, the writers say that three streams burst forth from its throat, namely, a very red stream of wine and a stream of oil and a stream of pure gold.⁶³

IV

There were sixteen miracles the night of Christ's birth.

1. The first miracle of them: A vineyard in⁶⁴ full fruit was found in Jerusalem in the winter.

5. The second miracle:⁶⁵ Every lock and every shutter opened alone in Bethlehem-Judah that night.

4. The third miracle: Fourteen wells sprang up out of the ground of Bethlehem. They tasted of wine.⁶⁶

2. The fourth miracle: A palm bloomed⁶⁷ in the winter in Jerusalem.

YBL. The fifth miracle: Jerusalem was illumined in the middle of the night.

YBL. The sixth miracle: The stars of heaven were illuminating⁶⁸ the temple of Jerusalem so that it was not neces-

possibly *tuiscin* as in Eg. At this point the latter manuscript reads *can cheill can tuiscin*, 'without sense [and] without understanding.'

⁴⁹ Eg: "that living persons (?) without ever sleeping should be glorifying Him without desisting [and] without ceasing."

⁵⁰ Lit., 'that is.'

⁵¹ Lit., 'druids.' Since *itir* governs the acc. in OIr but later the dat., one expects either *drúda* or *drúidib*. Of these two alternatives, the latter seems more likely in view of the following *noemaid*.

⁵² Eg: "godly."

⁵³ Presumably, *ecnaide* should be *ecnaidib*. In Eg, *ecnaidhi díbh* probably ought to be emended to *ecnaidhibh*.

⁵⁴ Eg: "His birth and His wisdom and His great miracles."

⁵⁵ Eg: "great."

⁵⁶ Eg: "the historians of learning"; hence, "the learned historians."

⁵⁷ In LFF, the shore is called *Mara Hen*, where *Mara* may be the gen. of *muir*, 'sea,' whereas in the account of the same miracle in "The evernew tongue" (*Ériu*, II, 118, sec. 57), it is termed *Ceaphas*.

⁵⁸ The name of this sea varies in the other manuscripts: *Cuais* (for which read *Cucais* ?), BF; *Caisp*, 'Caspian,' MS. 24. P. 25; and *Torrhan*, "Tyrrhenian," LFF.

⁵⁹ For *Semena*, BF and manuscript 24. P. 25 have *Semna* (*Séma*). Only when the source for this passage has been discovered can the correct reading be determined.

⁶⁰ Lit., 'indescribable [and] vast.' In Eg, *hanba* signifies 'huge.'

⁶¹ Although at present no other example of *for-aird* seems to be recorded, there is no valid reason for doubting the existence of this compound. Usually

the prefix *for-* has an intensive force; occasionally, however, it means 'above, super-' as in *forbrec*, 'speckled above,' *fórdorus*, 'lintel,' etc.

⁶² *Blaith* is a crux. It looks as if it were the plural of a noun *blath* designating some part of the animal's body. Unfortunately, Eg offers no aid: It reads *bl* with a dot over the bar of suspension.

⁶³ Eg: "and a beautiful stream of oil and a conspicuous stream of pure gold."

⁶⁴ Lit., 'under.'

⁶⁵ Lit., 'that is.'

⁶⁶ Lit., 'the taste of wine on them.'

⁶⁷ *Mo blath* seems intended for *fo blath*, 'in bloom.'

⁶⁸ Lit., 'at the illuminating of.'

sary⁶⁹ there to kindle (?)⁷⁰ lamps or lanterns⁷¹ during that night as⁷² always before that it had been necessary.

12. The seventh miracle: Christ healed⁷³ every disease that night, including leprosy and infirmity and lameness.⁷⁴

8. The eighth miracle: The windows and the doors of the temple were giving welcome and were opening⁷⁵ alone.

9. The ninth miracle: The infants of Bethlehem—each one who was in the womb of his mother and the infants who were being suckled⁷⁶—all were extolling Christ that night.

10. The tenth miracle: A well in Jerusalem sprang up throughout the land of Israel that night.

⁶⁹ Apparently *su*, which follows *erin*, has no force but is a scribal error caused by the ensuing *su* of *audarla*.

⁷⁰ The manuscript reads *conai* with a bar of suspension over the *i*, above which is a mark of aspiration; hence, any expansion is possible. Since in the corresponding passage of the poetry YBL has *adnad*, 'act of kindling,' presumably some synonym is here employed. Closest in form to *conaidh* is *conduth* (later *connadh*), 'firewood, fuel,' the verbal noun of the unrecorded verb *condof*, 'kindles,' for which compare Welsh *cynneu*. Perhaps, therefore, *conaidh* should be emended to *connadh* and translated by 'kindling,' which was its primary meaning before it was concretized; but, even so, one expects *do chonnadh* in this construction.

⁷¹ As *lochrann* originally was feminine, the plural of it should be *lochranna*.

⁷² Lit., 'and.'

⁷³ Lit., 'to healing.'

⁷⁴ Read *bacaidhe* (more correctly *bacaipe*), the abstract noun to *bacach*, 'lame.'

⁷⁵ Lit., '[were] at giving welcome and at opening.'

⁷⁶ Since the verb is singular, perhaps *na* is a mistake for *an*.

YBL: The eleventh miracle: Everyone awakened⁷⁷ out of his sleep when He was born.

11. The twelfth miracle: The blossoms [were laden] with⁷⁸ honey throughout the land of Israel.

3. The thirteenth miracle: Twelve fully ripe ears [of corn] were found⁷⁹ in the land of Bethlehem-Judah that night.

16. The fourteenth miracle: A whale that the Tyrrhenian Sea cast up to the strand of Mara Hen,⁸⁰ and three streams burst forth⁸¹ from its mouth, namely, a stream of milk and a stream of oil and a stream of wine; and fifty horns were upon it, and [there was] drink for one hundred and fifty warriors in every horn of them.

13. The fifteenth miracle: A star was giving guidance to them, to the Magi, from the western part⁸² of the world to the house wherein Christ was.

14. The sixteenth miracle: The quadrupeds were bellowing and were extolling the Son of God in their own tongues that night.

⁷⁷ Lit., 'the awakening of everyone.'

⁷⁸ Lit., 'under.'

⁷⁹ For *d'aghbail* read *d'jaghbail*, 'to finding.'

⁸⁰ This place-name is unidentified. *Mara* may be the gen. sing. of *muir*, 'sea,' for in the manuscript *Mara* and *Hen* are written as two separate words.

⁸¹ *Muidhi* seems corrupt for *muidhetar* or possibly for *muidhit*, the corresponding pres. indic. form.

⁸² The same mistake occurs in the poetry in UM but not in YBL.

B. POETRY

The night of the birth of Christ the
Fair

[There were] seventeen miracles of
the world.

Delightfully⁸³ are they related to
you

In the Gospel according to the He-
brews.

⁸³ Lit., 'It is delightful that.'

1. A miracle in the sharp winter was
A vineyard copious in fruit⁸⁴
When Christ, our friend, our lead-
er, was born,⁸⁵
When he saved Jerusalem.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Lit., 'under strong fruit.'

⁸⁵ Although the verse has nine instead of seven syllables, one of them does not count metrically be-
[Footnote 85 continued on following page]

⁸⁶ UM: "It happened in Jerusalem."

5. Another miracle in fair Bethlehem
[There was] the night of the birth
of Christ the Perfect.⁸⁷
Every bolted lock and every house
Was opening alone.⁸⁸
4. Fourteen wells were caused (?)⁸⁹
To spring up through the choice
earth⁹⁰
In the land of Bethlehem without
sorrow.
Who except God the Infinite⁹¹
might effect it?⁹²
2. Not had it been customary in
Jerusalem⁹³
[For] a palm in winter [to be] in⁹⁴
full bloom;
3. Twelve ears of corn⁹⁵ fully ripe⁹⁶
till now
Were found in the eastern part of
Bethlehem.
- LFF. Bright thereafter was the sun
In the middle of that night—
Pleasant [was] the story nor did
the span of time grow weary⁹⁷—
When it illumined Jerusalem.
And the fiery one⁹⁸ yonder
With its extreme glowing mass⁹⁹ of
stars
- LFF. Bright it unnecessary¹⁰⁰ in the tem-
ple in the east
To kindle light in the lamps.
8. Afterward the windows and the
doors
Of the temple¹⁰¹ with its bolts
In welcoming Christ without sin
Opened¹⁰² alone.¹⁰³
12. When he was born¹⁰⁴ Christ healed
Every disease that he found in
Bethlehem:

cause there is elision between the final *a* of *cara* and the *a* of *ar*. Furthermore, octosyllabic lines do occur from time to time in *debide* meter; apparently they were permitted as a poetic license. In UM, the additional syllable is eliminated by omitting the passive termination of the verb.

⁸⁷ Perhaps *comlain* should be emended to *comlainn*, the reading of UM. Nevertheless, *comlan* is a well-attested adjective, whereas no other examples of *comlan* seem to be recorded.

⁸⁸ Lit., 'in their oneness at opening.' In UM, the phrases are transposed, and the preposition *do* replaces *ac*; but, despite these changes, the rhyme with *teg* (*teagh*) is still a faulty one.

⁸⁹ Presumably *do-la* is the later form of *ro-lá* employed here, as often elsewhere, impersonally. At all events, it hardly can be intended for *de lo*, 'by day.' One is, of course, tempted to read *dola*, the genitive singular of *dul*, 'act of going' and hence 'act of flowing,' but the rules of strict *debide* verse require a monosyllable to rhyme with *toga*.

⁹⁰ For the collocation *talam toga*, see Edward Gwynn, *The metrical Dindsheanchas*, V ("Royal Irish Academy, Todd lecture series," Vol. XII [Dublin, 1935]), 307, s.v. "togu."

⁹¹ Lit., 'very great.'

⁹² The pronominal object must be supplied unless *do-neath* is emended to *da-neath*. In UM, *ro-neith*, 'might be able to effect,' apparently is the simplex *gníid* with a prefixed potential *ro*.

⁹³ Lit., 'of Jerusalem.' To the preposition *do*, UM adds the definite article and then, not to render the verse octosyllabic, it substitutes *nir*, the shortened form of the negative of the copula, for *nirbo*.

⁹⁴ Lit., 'with.' UM has *fo*, 'under.'

⁹⁵ Read *deis* with UM.

⁹⁶ Probably *lan-aipghe* is here the gen. sing. of the noun rather than the plural of the adj. *lan-apaíd*. Observe the elision between the *e* of *lan-aipghe* and the *a* of *a-le*, for which UM has *de*, 'of it [the palm].'

⁹⁷ In this cheville, *trell* may be construed as the subject or the object of the denominative verb *toirrsigid*(ir), *tairrsigid*(ir), which is both transitive and intransitive.

⁹⁸ Apparently the sun is meant, unless perhaps *tall* here signifies 'other,' in which case the reference may be to the moon.

⁹⁹ *Bruithen*, 'heat,' also denotes 'white-glowing metal,' which seems to be the meaning here intended. For *rig-bruithin*, UM has *rig-ruith in*, for which read *rig-ruithin*, 'extreme luster'?

¹⁰⁰ Lit., 'not was it necessary.'

¹⁰¹ *Tempall* must be emended to *tempaill*. Compare *teampaill* in UM.

¹⁰² Presumably the *d* of *ro-foslaiged* represents an earlier *t*; for, if the verb is preterite passive, then one expects a plural termination, which actually occurs in its MíR form in *ro-slaicit* of UM.

¹⁰³ Note the spelling *n-aenor* in UM to rhyme with *col*.

¹⁰⁴ UM employs the synonymous verb *ro-gcin*.

- Leprosy and infirmity together,
Blindness¹⁰⁵ and deafness, lameness.
9. The child in the womb and the
child on the breast
Praised the High King
On the night of the birth of Christ
the Fair
In Bethlehem pre-eminent [and]
pure of form.¹⁰⁶
10. In the opinion of everyone the act
was a miracle,¹⁰⁷
And though it was a miracle it was
true:
The well of water that burst forth¹⁰⁸
In the land of very rugged Israel.
- LFF. And every one awakened¹⁰⁹ out of
his sleep
When the Everlasting King was
born;
11. And the blossoms [were laden]
with¹¹⁰ honey
That night in the land of Judea.
13. A star before the Magi
From the eastern part¹¹¹ of the
created¹¹² world
Gave them guidance to the house
Wherein Christ definitely was.
15. Every mundane [and] stern sage
In Bethlehem from house to
house—¹¹³
If it be fitting,¹¹⁴ that will be its
answer—¹¹⁵
Related the knowledge of Him.¹¹⁶
Though sublime is there every
night,
More sublime is the night of which
we speak:
The Son of God—perform¹¹⁷ the
will of the Man—
Was born that night.
Finit. Amen.

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¹⁰⁵ *Daill* is doubtless a mistake for *dailli* or *daille*, the abstract noun to *dall*, 'blind,' as is indicated by the reading *deilli* in UM.

¹⁰⁶ These adjectives may also modify Christ. For *ball-glain*, nom. sing. *ball-glan*, 'pure-limbed,' UM has *ban-gil* from *ban-gel*, 'pale-white.'

¹⁰⁷ UM: "It was a miracle before every miracle." *Ingnadh*, however, cannot rhyme with *fir*.

¹⁰⁸ Lit., 'to bursting forth.' In UM, the corresponding finite verb *ro-maidm* occurs, so that possibly *do* in YBL is the later form of *ro*.

¹⁰⁹ Lit., 'and the awakening of everyone.'

¹¹⁰ Lit., 'under.'

¹¹¹ UM: "from the western part."

¹¹² Lit., 'creative, elemental.'

¹¹³ Lit., 'from wall to wall.' In an extended sense, however, *múr* often means 'a house.'

¹¹⁴ For *ail*, 'fitting, proper,' see J. Strachan, "O. Ir. *Áil*," *Archiv für celtische Lexicographie*, I (1899), 471.

¹¹⁵ Since this cheville appears in a corrupt form in YBL, the translation is based on the reading of UM.

¹¹⁶ This verse also seems corrupt in YBL as, in part, is shown by the fact that it contains eight syllables, whereas in UM, a *eyna do indáin* ("His knowledge to relating"), is heptasyllabic and likewise provides a clear meaning.

¹¹⁷ In UM, *denaidh* is the second person plural of the imperative.

VALENTIN ERNST LOESCHER'S *LITERATOR CELTA*

ARCHER TAYLOR

THIS curious book, which modern Celtic scholars have only rarely cited, is an instructive example of Celtic studies and eighteenth-century scholarship.¹ Since it combines two branches of literary investigation and has, furthermore, some features resembling a bibliography, I offer this brief description to my friend Tom Peete Cross, who has devoted his learning and energy to these three aspects of literary studies.

Valentin Ernst Loescher, born in 1673, is best known for his theological activities. He founded what has been called the first theological journal, *Altes und Neues aus dem Schatz theologischer Wissenschaft* (1701), which was continued as *Unschuldige Nachrichten von alten und neuen theologischen Sachen* (1702-19) and lasted under various names until 1761.² He is famous for his attack on pietism and the philosophy of Leibniz and Wolff. Although his theological interests and a varied professional career took him to Jüterbog, Delitzsch, Wittenberg, and finally Dresden, where he resided from 1707 until his death in 1749, he found time to write and to revise a handbook for students of Germanic linguistics. After the fashion of the day he included Gaulish and, so far as he knew them, the other Celtic languages, since he believed them to be Germanic languages. His booklet is probably the first conspectus of Celtic studies.

¹ I am indebted to Professor Donald F. Bond for information about the book and for verification of the references. I have used the copy in the University of Chicago Library.

² See Joachim Kirchner, *Die Grundlagen des deutschen Zeitschriftenwesens* (Leipzig, 1931), II, 75, No. 1025.

His letter to his friend Christian Feustel declares his intentions in writing *Literator Celta*:

Literator Celta eodem Schediasmate commemoratur, sive liber affectus de linguarum Celticarum veris originibus et progressu, quo imprimis de Radicibus antiquissimis et Noeticis, sive Celticis, speciatim sic dietis et Teutonicis Saxonice ac Alemannice agitur.

Non diffiteor, eo me genere literarum mirifice capi, et inter cupedias et λουσικάους voluptates censere, si grando vel per unam alteramque horulam his studiis vacare possim.³

The event demonstrated the correctness of Loescher's doubt about finding time for the task. It is difficult to know how extensive his collectanea were. His friend Johann Augustin Egenolf undertook to prepare them for publication; but, when the task was done and given to Loescher for approval, a long delay followed.⁴ When Egenolf finally got possession of the manuscript, another friend, a widower named Johann Elias Heder, who was living with him at the time, saw it and undertook to revise it. Unfortunately, Heder's abundant comments proved to be of little use, for Heder soon died and Egenolf could not read the tiny script. Four more years passed before Egenolf could return to the task and complete it.

The immediate inspiration of Loescher's book appears in the first lines:

Fas est, Germaniae, quae centrum et matrix septentrionalium gentium est, incolas prae ceteris elaborare in excolanda lingua, quam reliquae septentrionales genetricem agnoscunt,

³ "Praefatio," pp. [I]-[III].

⁴ Egenolf says: "Vero per nonnullos annos secum id retinet, occupationibus suis infinitis impeditus" (*ibid.*, p. [III]).

aut cognatam tamen natu maiorem venerantur; cum certum sit, ejus culturam omni literaturae septentrionali praeferre faciem idque magni viri, Vulcanius, Lipsius, Grotius, Junius, Cangius, Spelmannus, Menagius, alique ultro agnoverint.

He declares the central importance of Germanic studies and supports his assertion by authorities who are not Germans. The significance of what he was doing becomes apparent when we remember that Christian Feustel, to whom he had addressed the letter stating his plans, was the author of a *De eruditorum Germanorum vitis contra iniquas Gallorum nonnullorum censuras in specie de βιογράφους Germanorum contra Rolandi Maresii iudicium egit*.⁵ This book was one of many German answers to French criticisms of German scholarship. Daniel Georg Morhof, for example, promised such a reply,⁶ and Johann Christoph Coler reviewed the controversy.⁷ The title *Literator Celta* chosen by Loescher is confusing, unless we realize that he regarded the Celtic languages as belonging to the Germanic stock. Consequently, he could properly include a chapter on Celtic names in classical authors and at the same time rebuke what he regarded as French insolence.

The form which the book has owes its origin largely to the *Aliquot nomina propria Germanorum ad priscam etymologiam restituta*,⁸ a collection of etymologies which had circulated under Martin Luther's name since 1537 or even earlier. In an autograph letter of 1532, which was in Heder's possession, Erasmus had referred

to the *Aliquot nomina* as Luther's, but this passage is now regarded as somewhat suspicious. Believing the letter to be unpublished, Egenolf printed it as an appendix to the *Literator Celta*. Luther had found time to write an essay defending the Germans by citing etymologies, and consequently Loescher found it appropriate to follow so distinguished a model.⁹

The *Literator Celta* consists of thirty-six chapters, called "Theses." The last is claimed by Egenolf as his own; the others cannot be identified as belonging to either Loescher or Egenolf. The first reviews the value of Germanic studies. The second sets up four divisions of northern or Germanic languages: (1) ancient Germanic (i.e., including Gaulish); (2) Gothic, both southern (i.e., Gothic in the modern use) and northern (i.e., Scandinavian); (3) Saxon (i.e., Old English); (4) "Cambricae S. Wallicae vetustae, olim in universa, nunc in extrema Britannia florentis." The third chapter reviews briefly and well the available Old High German, Old English, and Old Norse texts in print. The fourth chapter continues this survey into the first quarter of the eighteenth century. After a summarizing, transitional fifth chapter, Loescher names the Germanic monuments in chronological order from Ulfilas of the fourth century to the Wenzel Bible of the fifteenth century. The seventh chapter enumerates the dictionaries, of which *Damesii lexicon Cambricum*¹⁰ alone deals with a Celtic language. The eighth chapter contains a bibliography of commentaries on editions of texts, but none of them is Celtic. Fi-

⁵ Leipzig, 1707.

⁶ *Polyhistor*, Book I, chap. xviii, § 50 (ed. 1747), I, 207.

⁷ A long note in B. G. Struve, *Introductio in notitiam rei litterariae* (5th ed.; Frankfurt a.M., 1729), pp. 419-28.

⁸ See Martin Luther, *Werke*, L (Weimar, 1913), 135 ff., with a learned introduction by Oscar Brenner.

⁹ "Cumprimis vero sancti Herois Lutherum excitare ad illud ornandum nos debet, qui in summo pro Ecclesiae periclitantis salute studio ac contentione, ut potuit, de his cogitavit literis, libellumque de antiquis Germanorum posteris reliquit" (*Literator Celta*, p. 1).

¹⁰ This is a Welsh dictionary by John Davies. The first edition appeared in 1612. Loescher's misspelling of the author's name suggests that he never saw the book.

nally, in the ninth chapter, after these long bibliographical prolegomena, Loesch-er comes to the divisions of the languages into three periods: (1) up to Pliny, inclusive; (2) from the end of the first century A.D. to Charlemagne; and (3) from Charlemagne to the Golden Bull (A.D. 1356). Within these periods he establishes various groups of linguistic records, e.g., "Reliquiae Gallorum veterum tam Celtae, quam Belgarum" (chap. i, sec. 1), "Britannarum" (chap. i, sec. 2), of various Germanic tribes (chap. i, secs. 3-7), and "Cimbrorum quibus etiam addi possint mīcae Hispanorum Celtiberorum" (chap. i, sec. 8). In the second and third periods he mentions no Celtic languages. The tenth chapter, which is devoted to the origins of the various tribes, contains an interesting reference to the Celts:

Aliquot post seculis Celtæ strictius dicti, quorum majores à Iapeti filiis orti ad septentrionem Ponti Euxini vixerunt, per Daciam, et Pannoniam superiorem ingressi sunt in Germaniam Sub-Hercynianam sive meridionalem, mediamque Galliam, quæ et Celtica hinc dicta est. Hi cum Gallos Aborigines sub iugum misissent, Hispaniæ quoque partem sub Celtiberorum nomine possederunt: denique et Britanniae incolae dederunt. Horum linguam et voces proprie appellamus Celticas.¹¹

In the eleventh chapter he insists upon the separation of Gaulish, Frankish (which Charlemagne used), and Franco-Gallic (i.e., French). The ancient language of the Gauls was, Loesch-er contends, beyond all doubt Celtic and closely related to that of the southern Germans. In the twelfth chapter he gives a list of ancient Germanic words. Since Germanic in his use includes Gaulish, many of these words which belong to his first period are Celtic. A few entries will show his manner of quoting from Latin classical authors and citing authorities:

¹¹ P. 11.

Aber Gallis portus dicebatur hinc Abrinca et Abrincates, quasi portu carens. Videatur Huetius in Originibus Cadonensibus p. 4. 6. 7. inde Havre Franco-Gallorum.

Abrana Gallis Simius dicebatur, juxta Hesychium Cambri vel hodie retinent dictionem Apranalog.

Acco Princeps Gallicus apud Caesarem lib. VI. de Bello Gall.

Later entries contain names found in Suetonius, Livy, Tacitus, Persius, Dioscorides, Valerius Maximus, Florus, and a scholiast on Juvenal. Loesch-er and Egenolf are apparently drawing on their own information for such an entry as the following:

Dunum Gallis urbem vel locum judicii significabat, unde Lugdunum, Eburodunum, Carrodunum, Gessodunum et alia, idemque Anglo-Saxonum Town.

They consult the best available etymological dictionaries for such an entry as this:

Glas, Glasdun, coeruleum colorem indicabat, unde Leibnitus derivat nomen lazoli lapidis l'Azur, quasi glasour. Videtur et vitri appellatio Germanica hinc descendere.

The remainder of the book, which is concerned with Loesch-er's second and third periods, contains very few Celtic words. These are taken almost exclusively from his etymological authorities and show no independent consultation of the available Celtic dictionaries and texts. It is interesting to note a bibliography of published saga texts¹² and a long discussion of the various Germanic languages and German dialects,¹³ but such matters are not pertinent to our present purpose.

¹² Pp. 62-63.

¹³ Loesch-er does not seem to be quite clear about the differences between Frisian and Dutch. This is somewhat surprising, since he passed part of his life in regions not very distant from those in which Frisian was spoken.

With our greater knowledge we can readily enough condemn the work of Loeschler and Egenolf, but to do so would be both unkind and unjust. Both men had an amazing control of the available scholarly tools. To be sure, they knew nothing of Irish, Welsh, or Breton as spoken languages and did not consult published Welsh materials. They dis-

played commendable care in assembling classical allusions to place-names and personal names and noted the important task of identifying Celtic names used in the Spanish peninsula. This task is still to be done. In sum, they proceeded very intelligently within the limits of their competence.

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ONCE AGAIN ARTHUR'S BATTLES

KENNETH JACKSON

THE early ninth-century compilation called *Historia Brittonum*,¹ attributed to "Nennius," gives what purports to be a list of twelve victories won by Arthur and the kings of the Britons over the Anglo-Saxon invaders. Like all the native names in Nennius, these are expressed in the contemporary form of the language called "Old Welsh."² They have occasioned much discussion, in the attempt to settle where these places were, and so to throw some light on the history of Arthur.

Various approaches are possible. Some believe that Arthur was a historical person of the fifth to sixth centuries, and that the list of battles represents faithfully a real tradition. If so, Arthur may have been a more or less local chieftain, with his activities restricted to some definite area; or, he may have been a military commander over the whole of what was left to the Britons of Roman Britain.³ Others think that there was no such person as Arthur, or that the actual list of names is not a

genuine tradition. They suppose that Nennius or some predecessor had heard of one Arthur, said to have won twelve victories over the invader, and that he wrote down twelve miscellaneous battles of history or legend the names of which he knew.⁴

Most writers have preferred to regard the story as trustworthy, and have inclined to the theory that Arthur was a local chief. Unfortunately there has been a tendency to decide first on historical or other grounds where this local Arthur seems likely to have functioned, and then to "find" the battles in place-names within that area, sometimes with excessive ingenuity. An equally unsound procedure is to conclude that because some one of the twelve places may seem certain, the rest must be in the same region. It is obvious that such methods are entirely improper.

The only sound approach is so far as possible to show first what the etymology, origin, subsequent development, and modern equivalents of the Nennian names may have been, and to examine the plausibility of previous suggestions, on linguistic grounds and irrespective of historical theory; and then to follow where the argument leads. This cannot be done without the aid of scientific philology. In Skene's time it was natural for him to make

¹ Ed. Th. Mommsen, *Monumenta Germaniae historica, auctor. antiquiss.*, Tom. XIII: *Chronica minora saec. IV-VII*, III, 111 ff.; see pp. 199-200.

² Abbreviated OW. Other abbreviations: OC. = Old Celtic, the common parent language; Br. = British, the Celtic language of the people of Roman Britain; Br.-Lat. = British-Latin, a British name with a Latin termination, a Romano-British name; MW. = Middle Welsh, early twelfth to fifteenth centuries; Mod.W. = Modern Welsh, fifteenth century to present day; OI. = Old Irish, eighth to tenth centuries. Asterisked words are inferred reconstructions. It should be remarked that OW. spelling does not represent pronunciation (see nn. 16 and 25 below).

³ So R. G. Collingwood, *Roman Britain and the English settlements* (2d ed.; Oxford, 1937), p. 321: "To say that he fought 'with the kings of the Britons' implies that his commission was valid all over the country, and that he fought not in any one kingdom or region, but wherever he was wanted"; and p. 322: "The sites of his twelve battles must not be sought in any one part of Britain. That the names are genuine is obvious."

⁴ Cf. O. G. S. Crawford, *Antiquity*, IX, 279: "It is most improbable that his source, whatever it may have been, gave simply a catalogue of Arthur's battles. It is far more likely that Nennius selected them from a general list of events, not necessarily all battles; or he may have attributed to Arthur battles recorded (as they often were) without any information about the combatants involved or the result"; also Sir J. E. Lloyd, *History of Wales* (3d ed., 1939), I, 126, n. 6: "To judge from the inclusion of 'in urbe legionis' . . . the list is a miscellaneous one of famous battles of the period and furnishes no clue to the real field of Arthur's operations."

guesses which we know to be phonetically out of the question. It is now no longer legitimate to approach this or any other such problem without a knowledge of Celtic philology as its discipline is constituted today. Nevertheless guesses at least as unfounded as Skene's continue to be made, and to be repeated by others who have not the equipment necessary to judge them, until the guess has grown into an accepted dogma.

The purpose of the present article is not to offer any new identifications. It is simply an attempt to clear the air, so heavily charged with accumulations of theory, by giving reasons why modern Celtic philology shows this identification to be impossible or that one to be plausible or probable; and so to define the problems for future research. This will make necessary a review of what has been written on the Twelve Battles in the past. The list of authorities used is by no means exhaustive, but it includes the chief works in the subject as well as some others; others still have not been thought worth mentioning.

1. W. F. Skene, *The Four Ancient Books of Wales* (Edinburgh, 1868), I, 52-58. Skene went on the theory that Arthur was a chief of the North, and hence discovered the battles in Scotland, even tracing Arthur's plan of campaign.

2. A. Anscombe, "Local names in the 'Arthuriana' in the 'Historia Brittonum'," *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, V (1904), 103-23. At first sight Anscombe appears to work on sound lines; but a closer examination suggests that he was convinced the battles must have been in the Midlands because the most certain identification was Chester—and then "found" them there. Like Skene, he even undertook to describe Arthur's plans of campaign.⁵ He makes use of philology, but

⁵ As an example of method (p. 114): "The direction of Arthur's progress has been southward from Chester and the Goyt to Leintwardine; so the probability is that Mount Agned is still further south."

often mistakenly; in his time Brythonic philology was in its infancy. He adopted an inferior manuscript (M) for text, another source of error.

3. E. Faral, *La Légende arthurienne* (Paris, 1929), I, 139-44.

4. W. G. Collingwood, "Arthur's battles," *Antiquity*, III (1929), 292-98. For Collingwood, Arthur fought only the Jutes of Kent, and consequently the battles had to be discovered in southeastern England. They were.

5. F. Lot, *Nennius et L'Historia Brittonum* (Paris, 1934), pp. 68-71 and 194-96.⁶

6. P. K. Johnstone, "The victories of Arthur," *Notes and queries*, CLXVI (1934), 381-82.

7. O. G. S. Crawford, "Arthur and his battles," *Antiquity*, IX (1935), 277-91.

The following should also be mentioned here, as touching some of the twelve names: E. Ekwall, *English river-names* (Oxford, 1928), and *Oxford dictionary of English place-names* (2d ed.; Oxford, 1940); W. J. Watson, *The history of the Celtic place names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926). Other sources in which individual battles are discussed will be mentioned in their place.

It is necessary to say a brief word about the text of Nennius,⁷ without going into any detail. Mommsen's edition is based on the two chief manuscripts of the best family, H (ca. 1100) and K (twelfth century). Another family is represented by M (eleventh century) and the more corrupt N (twelfth century). The variants of the twelve names in the latter group are inferior, *pace* Anscombe (p. 105); but both manuscripts give some additional notes on the names, which show that the original

⁶ Reference may also be made to W. A. Nitze, "Bédier's epic theory and the Arthuriana of Nennius," *MP*, XXXIX (1941), 1-14. He follows Lot in every case, so that it is not necessary to examine his treatments separately in the present article.

⁷ Full account in Mommsen, pp. 113 ff.; and Lot, pp. 1 ff.

of this part of the family must have been written or glossed by a Welshman with an independent knowledge of the Welsh tradition, and thus these glosses are valuable. Other manuscripts are of no special importance for our purpose, though they occasionally throw some light on the readings, as will be seen below.

Quoted from Mommsen's edition, the twelve battles are as follows:

1. *in ostium fluminis quod dicitur Glein*. HK *glein*; M *glein*, N *glemu*; CDGLP *glem*, Q *gem*. The reading *glein* must be correct.

The name, which would be **Glain* in Mod. W., is evidently a derivative in -*io*- or -*iā* from Br. **glanos*, Welsh *glan*, 'pure, clear,' referring to the character of the water. It can have no connection with the word for "glen," OW. **glinn*, OI. *glenn*; hence guesses based on modern names in "Glen" = 'valley' are worthless.

The Glen, a river flowing into the Till, is referred to by Bede in a passage on the conversion of the Northumbrians (*HE* ii. 14) as *Gleni* (Latin gen. sing.), which is the OE. *Glene* (see Ekwall, *River-names*, p. 177). Skene (p. 52) mentions this, but prefers a river of the same name in Ayrshire because this suits better his theory about Arthur's field of activity. Anscombe (p. 106) allows that *Glein* could be the Northumberland Glen, but emends to *Gloin* (against all the manuscripts), and equates this with the Lancashire Lune. No reason is given for the arbitrary emendation, but presumably it was to find a site in the Midlands. In spite of Anscombe's "Loyne," the early forms of Lune do not support it (see Ekwall, *River-names*, pp. 270-71), nor do the etymologies proposed by Ekwall (*ibid.*). Faral (p. 141) suggests as alternative two Scotch "Glen" names = 'valley,' which are ruled

out for the reasons given. W. G. Collingwood (p. 294) takes *Glein* for the Glynde stream in Sussex, in accordance with his ideas about Arthur; and explains the -*d*- as being "as in the Celtic spelling, e.g. *Circind* for *Circinn*." Ekwall (*Dictionary*, s.v.) shows that Glynde is probably Germanic; and Johnstone (p. 381) is right to say that *Glein* = Glynde is "philologically impossible." The so-called "Celtic spelling" is valid only for Middle Irish, and is quite irrelevant here. Ekwall (*River-names*, p. 177) tentatively accepts the Northumberland Glen, but does not mention it in the *Dictionary* (s.v.). Lot (p. 68) thinks *Glein* was taken from Bede; and Johnstone (p. 381) refers to the Lincolnshire Glen as well as the Northumberland, and also to the villages of Great and Little Glen in Leicestershire. Crawford (p. 285) says the Northumberland Glen would be obvious but for the fact that it has no *ostium*, i.e., does not flow into the sea. He suggests however that Nennius was thinking in terms of Welsh *aber*, 'river-mouth,' which is applicable not only to an estuary but also to a confluence; this may very well be right.⁸ In any case, there is no philological objection to the equation *Glein* = the Northumberland or Lincolnshire Glen.

2, 3, 4, and 5. *flumen quod dicitur Dubglas et est in regione Linnuis*. HK *dubglas*; MN, CDGLPQ, *duglas*. HK *linnuis*; CPL *linuis*; N *inniis*. The readings *dubglas* and *linnuis* are clearly right.

The former is from Br. **duboglasso*, 'blue-black,' which seems to be confused in place-names with Br. **duboglassio*, OW. **dubleis*, later OW. *Dugleis*, 'black stream'; these are fairly common in Britain, under the forms Douglas, Dawlish,

⁸ All through these names, Nennius is obviously translating Welsh phrases into Latin (cf. *urbs legionis*, *silex Celidonia*, *lilus fluminis Tribruit*, etc., below). It would follow that here he knew of an OW. **Oper Glein*.

Dowlish, Divelish, Devil's Brook, Dalch, Dulais, Dulas, etc. (see Ekwall, *River-names*, pp. 129-33). In later OW. the *-b* of *dub* is dropped; the younger form *duglas* is reflected here in the variant readings.

Among so many names the choice is wide. Skene (p. 53) took it for the Upper or Lower Douglas flowing into Loch Lomond, because of his identification of *Linnuis*; and Lot (p. 68) agrees with this. Anscombe (p. 107) prefers the Lancashire Douglas, which Faral allows (p. 141). Anscombe did not understand the *-b* in *Duglas*, and thought it due to Irish influence, or an error for *duoglas*; he adopted the later reading *duglas*, supposing M to be the best manuscript. To Collingwood (p. 294) "Black Stream" suggests the Kent Water in Sussex, called in 1288 "Le Black"; comment would be superfluous. Crawford and Johnstone, impressed by the multitude of possibilities, make no claims—a decision with which it is rational to agree.

Linnuis has been a source of error. Skene (p. 53) took it for the district of Lennox in the neighborhood of Loch Lomond. Anscombe (p. 107) notes that *Linnuis* would represent Br.-Lat. **Lindenses*, the inhabitants of the Lincoln region. Since there is no Douglas there (and it is not in the Midlands), he rejects this very sound suggestion in favor of an emendation *Liunuis*, which he imagines could stand for a Br.-Lat. **Leonenses*, meaning according to him 'the men of Chester.' The fallacy in the grounds for rejecting **Lindenses* is obvious. Moreover, the word proposed instead would be Br.-Lat. **Legionenses*, which would give OW. **Legionuis*, not **Liunuis*; and in any case **Legionenses* could not mean 'the men of Chester.' Finally, it would be odd to have Chester twice in the List, in two quite different forms (see below). Faral, who allowed Anscombe's Lancashire Douglas, is cautious about Chester (p. 141). Lot

(p. 68) follows Skene, and rightly objects to Anscombe that *Linnuis* is a *regio*. Collingwood (pp. 294-95), seeking a site in Kent or Sussex, connects *Linnuis* with the *Limin-*, *Limen-*, found in a number of East Sussex names (cf. Ekwall, *River-names*, pp. 243-46). Now this latter word lies at the base of the Scotch "Lennox" (see below); and Collingwood, having in mind Skene's equation *Lennox* = *Linnuis*, argued that therefore *Limin-* also = *Linnuis*, and placed the region in Sussex. Johnstone (p. 381) derived *Linnuis* from **Lindensia*, 'land of Lindum' (Lincoln), from which comes the OE. kingdom-name *Lindisse*, the modern district of Lindsey in Lincolnshire. Crawford (p. 286) suggests the same, but points as well to *Lindisfarne*. Sir J. E. Lloyd (*History of Wales*, I, 126) also equates *Linnuis*, from **Lindenses*, with Lindsey.

Skene's unfortunate proposal of Lennox has had a life which is strangely long, in view of its impossibility. "Lennox" is an English pluralization of the Scotch Gaelic *Leamhnach*, which goes back to OI. *Lemnach*, and means 'a man of *Leamhain*' (OI. *Lemain*). *Leamhain* is the River Leven, and also the whole district of Lennox (cf. Watson, pp. 119-20, where he shows that the modern *Leamhnacht* is a later form). It is derived from OC. **Lēmanis*,⁹ meaning 'Elm Forest' or 'Elm Land'—the word which lies at the base of the Sussex *Limene* names (Br.-Lat. *Portus Lemanis* = *Lympne*). If the word *Lemain* were borrowed from OI. into OW., it would probably be written **Lemein* or **Lemin* by Nennius. But the same stem existed in Br. in a different form, namely **Lēman-*. This appears to be the origin of the MW. names *Llwyfein* and *Llwyfenyd* which oc-

⁹ Ptolemy's *Lēmannonios* bay, identified with Loch Fine or Loch Linhe in Argyllshire, is from the same stem and clearly refers to the same general area (cf. Watson, *ibid.*). An example in Gaulish is *Lacus Lēmannus*, the Lake of Geneva.

cur in early Welsh poetry, both from Br. **Lēmania* with different accentuations; these belong to another part of Scotland (cf. Watson, p. 344), but they indicate what form an OW. cognate of the Irish name for Lennox might have taken, i.e., **Luiman* (from **Lēmanis*), **Luimein* or **Luimenid* (from **Lēmania*). In any case it is quite evident that OW. *Linnuis* cannot be Lennox or the Sussex *Limene*.

As several writers have seen, OW. *Linnuis* would come from Br.-Lat. **Lindēnsis*, **Lindēnsēs*, or **Lindēnsia*; and the identification with Lindsey is very reasonable. These Welsh names in *-wys*, OW. *-uis*, from **-ēns-*, always refer to regions and their inhabitants, so that *in regione* is apt.

6. *flumen quod vocatur Bassas*. All manuscripts agree on the name.

Skene's attempt to locate this at Dunipace in Scotland (pp. 53-54) is not worth discussing. Anscombe's Baxenden in Lancashire (p. 108), from a pointless emendation *Bascan*, and the suggested Bassen-thwaite which he mentions, are both shown by Ekwall's *Dictionary* (s.v.) to be impossible. Faral, Lot, Johnstone, Collingwood, and Crawford have nothing to offer. About all that can be said is that, as Johnstone notes, the word suggests Welsh *bas*, 'shallow'; and that *Bassas*, proximately from a British **Bassass-*, is an unlikely form, perhaps corrupt. Crawford (p. 286) points to the OE. personal name *Bassa*; and one thinks of the *Eglwysseu Bassa*, 'Churches of Bassa,' of a ninth-century Welsh elegy, identified by Ifor Williams¹⁰ and Ekwall's *Dictionary* (s.v.) with Baschurch = "Bass's Church" in Shropshire. However a Saxon place-name in Shropshire is not probable in Arthur's time. If we emended *flumen quod vocatur Bas* we should at least have an intelligible river-name, and the *-sas*

would be a simple case of dittography; but the manuscript agreement is rather against this.

7. *in silva Celidonis, id est Cat Coit Celi-don* ("the Battle of the Wood of Celidon"). HK *celidonis*; CDLPQ *calidonis*, G. *callidonis*. All manuscripts *celidon*; MN add *quae bryttannicae cat coit (N toil) celidon (N celidan) nominatur*.

Coit Celidon is the OW. spelling of MW. *Coet Celydon*, Mod. W. *Coed Celyddon*, "The Wood of Celyddon," a famous place in medieval Welsh legend.¹¹ As it appears there its location is vague; but it was evidently within range of Glasgow and Carlisle, perhaps the moorlands round the upper Clyde and Tweed valleys,¹² and certainly in Scotland. Nennius' *silva Celidonis* and the OW. *Coit Celidon* are clearly equivalent to the *silva* or *saltus Caledoniae* of classical writers, generally regarded as the mountain massif of the Grampians in the country of the Caledonians.¹³ According to Hübner, the

¹¹ See references in J. Lloyd-Jones, *Geirfa barddoniaeth gynnar Cymraeg*, Part I (Cardiff, 1931), sv.

¹² The evidence is found in the early Welsh legend of Myrddin = Merlin = Lailoken. Briefly, Myrddin was associated with Rhydderch of Dumbarton and the battle of Arfderydd = Arthuret some miles north of Carlisle, and after the battle lived in the Wood of Celyddon, apparently thought of as in that neighborhood. Lailoken was met by Kentigern of Glasgow near a wood, came thence to Glasgow, and was killed in a wood near Drumeizier on the upper Tweed; Coed Celyddon is probably meant. On these legends, which belong to the group of Welsh traditions about the British kingdoms of southern Scotland, see H. M. and N. K. Chadwick, *The growth of literature*, I (Cambridge, 1932), 108 ff.; and on their independence of Geoffrey of Monmouth see K. Jackson, "The motive of the threefold death in the story of Suibhne Gellit," in *Essays and studies presented to Professor Eoin MacNeill*, ed. J. Ryan (Dublin, 1940), p. 544, n. 30, and pp. 548-49. No Celtic scholar would nowadays believe that Merlin is the invention of Geoffrey, though some Arthurianists still do. This depends partly on Welsh linguistics and partly on an understanding of the nature of the early Welsh literary tradition.

¹³ See Hübner in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*, V (1897), col. 1347. J. Loth (*Revue celtique*, XLVII, 1) purports to quote the authority of W. F. Skene (*Celtic Scotland* [Edinburgh, 1878], I, 86) that the Caledonian Forest stretched from Monteith to

¹⁰ *Canu Llywarch Hen* (Cardiff, 1935), see pp. 38-39 and 213.

southern boundary of Caledonia was probably much the same as the present Scotch Border; and if so it is possible that the ancient *Silva Caledoniae* may have included the Southern Uplands. However that may be, Welsh tradition must have known vaguely of the same forest as the ancients did, and preserved its name, without necessarily locating it in the same part of Scotland. Nennius, whose sources here are Welsh legend, would know of the traditional Coed Celyddon rather than the classical *Silva Caledoniae*.

Skene, Lot, Johnstone, and Crawford all give the identification with Coed Celyddon, Faral with *silva Caledonica* (*sic*); Anscombe and Collingwood, following their own hypotheses, reject it. Anscombe (pp. 108-9) creates a great forest conveniently stretching from the Thames to Scotland, which he calls by the invented name "Cilidin," choosing to place the battle in that part of it near Leeds. Faral (p. 142) and Lot (p. 69, n. 2) rightly reject this; Lot describes it as extravagant. Collingwood's statement (p. 295) that "*celyddon* seems to have been used of British forests generally" is an error of fact; and his conclusion, that the most famous of these forests was the Weald and therefore Coed Celyddon was also the Weald, is a gross logical fallacy. The argument that it cannot be in Scotland because Geoffrey of Monmouth, "himself a Celt," put in it the Midlands, is characteristic.

Dunkeld. Lot (p. 69, n. 2) follows Loth. Actually, Skene says nothing of the kind, as a simple verification of the reference would have shown. Hübner prefers the form *Calidon*, which incidentally is postulated by the OW. *Celidon*. Earlier OW. would be **Calidon*, and the variant *silva calidonia* in Nennius may reflect this, and need not be a mere late assimilation to the Latin word. If so, it should be accepted into the text. Note that the old etymology relating Caledonia to Irish *coill*, Welsh *celli*, 'wood,' is impossible; and there is no Welsh common noun *celydd*, meaning 'woody retreat,' as is sometimes stated. The etymology of Caledonia is unknown.

8. in *castello Guinnion*. HK *guinnion*; CPQ *guinnon*; DG *guinon*; L *gunnion*. The correct reading must be *guinnion*.

Skene (pp. 54-55) puts this battle in Wedale, for quite insufficient reasons, but gives no explanation of the name beyond noting that it seems to contain the Welsh word for 'white.' Anscombe (p. 110) identifies the place with Binchester, County Durham, the British *Vinovia* (Ravennas, Antonine Itinerary; or *Vinovion* [Ptolemy]). To avoid the difficulty of the -nn- in the Welsh word, he emends to *Guinuion*, saying "the gemination of the liquid *n* in *guinnion* appears to me to be erroneous"; why it should be "erroneous" is not stated, but clearly it was because it did not suit *Vinovia*. He is followed by Faral (p. 142) and Lot (pp. 69, 195); both are very positive. Lot seems to be responsible for the adoption of the form *Vinnovion*, in the Br.-Lat. dress *Vinnovium*, evidently intending this to fit *Guinnion* better. However, in the standard edition of Ptolemy (C. Müller, *Claudii Ptolemaei Geographia* [Paris, 1883], I, 97) *Vinovion* is the form accepted, though other manuscripts do read *Vinnovion*; the evidence quoted there shows that the single *n* is probably right. Johnstone (p. 381), who gives *Vinnovion*, says it "might easily become *Guinnion*." Crawford (p. 287) tentatively makes the same equation, printing *Vinovia*, but with reservations. Only Collingwood disagrees, as usual for the reason that the place is not in Sussex.

The general consent given to Binchester is the more striking in that the arguments are mistaken. Actually OW. *Guinnion* would come from a British **Vindion*- or **Vinnion*-;¹⁴ probably the former, as it contains the known stem **vindo*-, 'white,'

¹⁴ It may be noted here as important that a Welsh word ending in -(i)on cannot be the equivalent of a Br. one in -(i)on or a Br.-Lat. one in -(i)um, for the reason that all final syllables in British were lost in Welsh; hence a Welsh ending -(i)on was not final in British.

whereas there is no known Br. *vinn-. It might stand for Br. *Vindiones, 'The White People,' something like *Dūnon Vindionōn = *Castellum Alborum*; the MW. plural of *gwynn*, 'white' (Br. *vindos) was *gwynnion*, from OW. *guinnion*, Br. *vindiones. This cannot be Binchester. The best reading of the Br. name for that place is *Vinovia* or *Vinovion*, probably with *vino-, 'wine, vine,' which would become OW. *Guinnui or *Guinoi, Mod. W. *Gwinwy; cf. the Br.-Lat. *Conovium*, OW. *Conui or *Conoi, Mod. W. *Conwy*, 'Conway.' Even if *Vinovion* were correct, this would become OW. *Guinnui or *Guinoi, not *Guinnion*; and, *pace* Johnstone, it could not contain the word for 'white,' since -nd- was not assimilated to -nn- in Br. If we choose, like Anscombe, to emend to *Guinnion*, this could come from a Br. *Vinoviones, which might mean "the people of Vinovia." But *Guinnion* has every appearance of being a genuine form, and we have no right to alter it for the sake of upholding an identification previously made on mistaken grounds. In any event, the *Bin-* of Binchester cannot be from Br. *Vin-*, which would give *Win-* in English (on the etymology see Ekwall, *Dictionary*, s.v. "Binchester").

9. in 'urbe Legionis. MN in urbe leogis quae bryttanicae Cair Lion dicitur.

Skene (p. 55) rejects Caerleon and Chester, and in desperation proposes Dumbarton. Anscombe (p. 112) gives Chester, followed by Faral (p. 142). Lot (pp. 69 and 195), Johnstone (p. 381), Crawford (p. 287), and Lloyd (I, 126) all concur. Collingwood (p. 296), unable to allow anywhere not in southeastern England, suggests Porchester, but his reasoning is as weak as usual.

In this case the very general agreement is probably right. Two of the three Roman legionary fortresses in Britain—

Chester and Caerleon—derive their Welsh names from the Latin *Castra Legionis*; OW. *Cair Legion* (Nennius, ed. Mommsen, p. 211), later OW. *Cair Lion*, *Cair Leon*, M. and Mod. W. *Caer Llion*, *Caer Lleon*. The third—York—is OW. *Ebrauc* (Nennius, ed. Mommsen, p. 211), from the Br.-Lat. name *Eboracum*, and is excluded here. The reading of MN, *leogis*, is corrupt, but the added gloss correctly gives the later OW. form. The choice between Chester and Caerleon is not quite so easy as it has been thought. Chester is simply *Cair Legion* in Nennius' *Civitates Britanniae* (Mommsen, p. 211); so Bede (*HE* ii. 2): "ad civitatem Legionum quae . . . a Brettonibus . . . Carlegion appellatur" (the battle of Chester); *Annales Cambriae* (s.a. 602), *sinodus urbis Legion* (Chester), and (s.a. 614) *gueith Cair Legion*, 'the battle of Chester.' Caerleon is properly *Caer Lleon* or *Wysg*, "Caerleon-upon-Usk" as it is called in English also; and that this was already so in Nennius' time is shown in the correct OW. *Cair Legion guar Uisc* (Mommsen, p. 211, emend so). Johnstone (p. 381) and Crawford (p. 287) are rather too positive in asserting that *urbs Legionis* without "upon Usk" must therefore be Chester and not Caerleon. In the first place, Nennius' *urbs Legionis* is Latin,¹⁵ and we cannot be sure that he would have felt obliged to add *super Uiscam* or the like to this for Caerleon, though the chances are that he would. Again, the name for Caerleon does occur in medieval Welsh without the modifying phrase (see examples in J. Lloyd-Jones, *Geirfa barddoniaeth gynnar Cymraeg*, Part I, p. 96). However, the balance of probability is in favor of Chester.

¹⁵ Of course, *urbs Legionis* is a translation of OW. *Cair Legion*; i.e., it means *Cair Legion*, not "the city of Legion" or "the city of the Legion." The Br.-Lat. name for Chester was *Deva*, and for Caerleon *Isca*, both really river-names, the latter (via **Esca*) giving OW. *Uisc*.

10. in litore fluminis, quod vocatur Tribruit. H tribruit, K tribruit; MN quod nos vocamus M trahtheuroit N tractheuroit; CDGLP ribroit, Q robroit.

Anscombe, who takes M for his authority, proposes (p. 113) the reading *Traetheu Goit*, mis-written *Traetheu Roit*, and says it is the Goyt river in Cheshire. Faral (p. 142) is cautious about this. Colingwood (p. 296) would see in *Tribruit* a form *tri-brut*, which he would render apparently "Three Running (Streams)," and takes this to be Chichester Harbour on the grounds that it has three estuaries. Lot (pp. 69 and 195), Johnstone (p. 382), and Crawford (p. 288) all follow Skene (pp. 56-57) in identifying *Tribruit* with a name which occurs three times in early Welsh poetry in the abnormal spellings *Tryrwyd*, *Trywuid*, and *Traetheu Trywuid*.¹⁶ In the usual MW. spelling this would be **Tryrwyd* (Mod. W. **Tryrwyd*) and **Traetheu Tryrwyd*; and it comes from OW. *Tribruit* or **Tribroit* and **Traithou Tribruit* or **Traithou Tribroit*. **Traithou Tribruit*, Mod. W. **Traethau Tryrwyd*, means "the Strands of Tryrwyd," and the singular would be **Traith Tribruit*, "the Strand of Tryrwyd." It is clear enough that this identification is correct, and that the reading of H is the right one. The readings of K and CDGLPQ arise by easy scribal error; the latter group come from the spelling *tribroit*. As for MN, they evidently go back to a reading *Traith Tribroit*, where a common exemplar misread *Tribroit* as *Treuroit*; M then dropped *il*, and N wrote *c* for *i* and skipped *tr* after *th*.

Skene (pp. 56-57) equated the name with the Forth, believing the latter part of the word in its abnormal MW. spell-

ing *-wuid* to be identical with the Welsh name of the Forth, *Gweryd* (Skene wrongly *Gwerid*). Lot (pp. 69, 195) accepts this. It is impossible. *Gweryd* would be **Guerit* in OW., which cannot have anything to do with OW. *-bruit*; and the *w* in this *-wuid* is a *v*, not a *w*. Nor is it clear what a compound **Triguerit* could mean. Anscombe's "Goyt" is an unnecessary emendation based on a corrupt reading, for the sake of finding a Midland site; and moreover the Goyt is an inland river and so has no *traeth* (see below). Johnstone (p. 382) notes that no modern river-name derives from *Tribruit*. Crawford (pp. 287-88) wishes to take the various forms as standing for an OW. **Trifrut*, which he analyzes as *tri*, 'three,' and *frut* (Mod. W. *ffrud*), 'stream,' and tentatively suggests the Fords of Frew in the Vale of Menteith. Frew is derived from *ffrud* by Watson (pp. 349-50). But neither *Tribruit* nor the later Welsh spellings can represent an OW. **Trifrut*. It is unlikely in any case that the *tri-* of *Tribruit* can be 'three,' since the MW. forms show *Try-*.¹⁷

OW. *Tribruit* or *Tribroit*, Mod. W. *Tryrwyd*, consists clearly of *try-* (OW. *tri-*), 'through, thorough, excessive,' and *brwyd* (OW. **bruit*, **broit*), 'pierced, broken.' The word *tryrwyd* actually exists in MW. as an adjective, used of a shield, 'pierced through'; and also sometimes as a noun meaning 'battle,' perhaps from the piercing or breaking of the ranks.¹⁸ In *Traith Tribruit* the word is a name, "Tryrwyd, i.e., Pierced or Broken (Place)," referring to some natural feature; the whole phrase is, therefore, "The Strand of Tryrwyd, i.e., of the Pierced or Broken (Place)." In view of the meaning of *traeth* (see below), the words in MN,

¹⁶ *Black book of Carmarthen*, fols. I a 6, XLVII b 11, and XLVIII a 10. Since such spellings are peculiar to certain manuscripts, identifications based on them are worthless. The labial consonant in this word was and is pronounced *v*, from OW. to Mod.W., whether spelled *b*, *v*, *u*, *w*, or *f*; and represents Br. *b*.

¹⁷ In a very few compounds, however, such as *trychant*, 'three hundred,' there is MW. *try-* instead of *tri-* for 'three.'

¹⁸ See Ifor Williams, *Canu Ancirin* (Cardiff, 1938), p. 294; and also p. xxix, where he shows that Loth's "Rivage de la bataille" is wrong.

in litore fluminis quod nos vocamus Traith Tribroit (emend so) signify of course that the *litus fluminis* was called by the Welsh *Traith Tribroit*, not that the *flumen* was. The version of H, in *litore fluminis, quod vocatur Tribruit*, has generally been taken to mean a river called Tribruit; but there is no reason why the antecedent of *quod* should not be *litus* instead of *flumen*, in which case the Latin would be "on the river-strand which is called Tribruit." Hence we should not look for a river called Tryfrwyd but for a beach.

Traeth in Welsh means the sands of the shore between high- and low-tide marks; and as applied to a river, the sandbanks of a tidal estuary, such as that of the Solway. It does not mean the bank of an inland river.¹⁹ Evidently then the *traeth*, which for Nennius was a *litus fluminis*, was somewhere round the mouth of a tidal river; and there was some natural feature there, such as a channel or gully, which caused it to be called "The Strand of the Pierced, or Broken (Place)." In one of the MW. sources the name is given in the plural, "The Strands."

In the same poem, an early one detailing the exploits of Arthur's warriors, it is said that "Manawydd brought back a broken shield from Tryfrwyd;" which, taken together with Nennius, makes it clear that Welsh tradition associated Arthur with a battle at this place. The third MW. source occurs in a poem referring to a battle in connection with Myrddin, and so Tryfrwyd is perhaps to be regarded as being somewhere in the North, possibly southwestern Scotland.

11. in monte qui dicitur Agned. So HK; MN qui nominatur breguoin (N breuoin) . . . quem nos cat bregion appellamus; P agned cat bregomion; Q agned tha bregomion; CDGL agned cath regomion.²⁰

¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. xxxiii.

²⁰ Note that such are the variant readings. Lot gives them correctly (p. 195), but on p. 69 wrongly

This is the most complicated of all these problems. What are we to make of *Breguoin*,²¹ *Bregomion*, and *Cat Bregion*? It appears that the first two represent something in the original text which was probably accidentally omitted in the HK group; either *Breguoin* is correct, or *Bregomion*, or both are corruptions of another word. On the other hand, MN do not mean *Cat Bregion* to be a third variant of this same word; as usual, the originator of the MN notes was adding a further gloss, drawn from his own knowledge of Welsh legend, just as in Nos. 7 and 9. He meant "which we (now) call *Cat Bregion*, the Battle of Bregion" (OW. *cat* = 'battle'). Quite probably he may not have understood *Breguoin* or have known where it was, but he was reminded of a Battle of Bregion on a certain etymological principle familiar to Fluellen and others after him.²²

Skene (p. 57) omits all mention of *Breguoin*, etc., and merely states, without authority, that *mons Agned* is Edinburgh. Anscombe (p. 115) points to the hill of Aconbury in Herefordshire, and thinks this represents *Agon* or *Acon*; *Agned* he then supposes (on mistaken grounds) should mean "Land of Agon or Acon," and *mons Agned* "Hill of the Land of Agon," i.e., Aconbury. But *Agned* cannot be a derivative of his *Agon* or *Acon*, with what he calls a "locative suffix" *-ed* (see below); and besides, Ekwall (*Dictionary*, s.v.) shows that Aconbury is from OE.

states that CDGL read *qui nominatur breguoin*. The misprint in this last word has unfortunately been adopted from Lot, without checking the text, by some later writers. Again (p. 17) Lot misprints *breuoin* as *breuion*, and says: "les mots *cat breguoin* sont indispensables," repeating the error, unless we are to take this as an unacknowledged emendation.

²¹ The reading of N, *breuoin*, is simply a later OW. form of older *breguoin*.

²² Of course textually *bregion* could easily be taken as a mere variant of *breguoin-bregomion*, as Anscombe does (p. 114); but analogy suggests strongly that this is not the case, and that it is a secondary gloss.

**æweornabyrig*, 'old fort inhabited by squirrels.' Next, having proposed the emendation **Breguoinion*, Anscombe equates this with the Br.-Lat. *Bravonium*,²³ Leintwardine in Herefordshire. Faral (p. 144) rejects Aconbury but describes **Breguoinion* = *Bravonium* as "phonétiquement irréprochable." Collingwood (pp. 296-97) offers no solution. Lot (p. 69) cannot solve *Agned*, refuses Edinburgh, and apparently regards Aconbury as absurd. He calls Leintwardine an ingenious guess, but (p. 70) prefers Brougham in Westmorland, the *Brovacum* of the Antonine Itinerary.²⁴ On page 17 he uses his misprint or emendation *breguion* to coin an imaginary *cat Breguion*, which he evidently supposes can be the same as *cat Bregion*.²⁵ Johnstone (p. 382) suggests that *Agned* is the Mod. W. *annedd*, 'dwelling,' and relates *Bregion* to the OC. **brega* (recte **briga*), 'hill.' He appears to accept Edinburgh, but gives no reason.

R. Blenner-Hasset has devoted an article²⁶ to the name *Agned* as it appears in Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist. reg. Brit.* ii. 7: "condidit . . . oppidum montis Agned quod nunc Castellum Puellarum dicitur et Montem Dolorosum." Castellum Puellarum is a medieval name for Edinburgh Castle,²⁷ and Skene got his unacknowledged identification from Geoffrey. Blenner-Hasset regards *Mons Dolorosus* as a gloss on *mons Agned*, and attempts to re-

late *Agned* to the Mod. W. *angen*, pl. *anghenion*, 'necessity, want.' He is forced to invent a new plural, quoted always as "**ang(e)ned*" and translated 'sorrows,' to make the connection with *Mons Dolorosus* more plausible. The whole argument is far from clear. The objections to this are as follows: There is no known plural of the word in *-edd*, though an alternative plural termination is theoretically possible. The syncope implied in the phrase "OW. **ang(e)ned*" is out of the question. Mod. W. *angen*, pl. *anghenion*, would be spelled in OW. **ancen*, **ancenion*; and in MW. it is *aghen*, *aghenion*. The word means 'necessity,' not 'sorrow.'²⁸ Hence *Agned* is not in the least likely to have suggested either OW. **ancen*, MW. *aghen*, or *dolorosus*, to Geoffrey or any predecessor of his; nor can the *Agned* of Nennius have been a mistake for some name derived from OW. **ancen*.

What is OW. *Agned*? Medial OW. *-g-* was derived from Br. *-g-* (see n. 25). But Br. *-g-* and *-c-* were lost before *-n-*, with diphthongization, in Welsh; so that Br. **agned-* or **acned-* would give OW. **ained*. In other words, the *-g-* in *Agned* cannot be [ɣ] (from Br. *-g-*) or [g] (from Br. *-c-*) in pronunciation. OW. *Agned* can only represent a spelling error for **Angned*. This could come from some unknown Br. word **angned-*; or it could be a negative or intensive compound, OW. *an* + **gned*, whatever that might mean. Neither could be Johnstone's *annedd*. The identification with Edinburgh rests solely on the authority of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and most scholars have been very rightly reluctant to accept such testimony. *Agned* must remain unsolved.

This leaves *Breguoin-Bregomion* and *Cat Bregion*. Since this last is probably not part of the main tangle (see above), and its etymology is easy, it would be bet-

²³ This is the better reading (Antonine Itinerary), but Anscombe prefers the inferior *Bravinium*.

²⁴ Lot says "or *Brozonacia*"; but this is Kirkby-Thore (see below).

²⁵ It should be noted that OW. *-gu-* and *-g-* are not interchangeable, and OW. *bregion* and **breguion* could not be the same word. Medial OW. *-gu-* is from Br. *-v-* and was pronounced [w]. Medial OW. *-g-* is from Br. *-g-* and was pronounced as the voiced guttural or palatal spirant [ɣ] or [g].

²⁶ "Geoffrey of Monmouth's Mons Agned and Castellum Puellarum," *Speculum*, XVII (1942), 250 ff.

²⁷ This is made quite clear by G. Chalmers, *Caledonia* (Paisley, 1887-92), IV, 555-59; cf. Watson, pp. 341-42.

²⁸ Anscombe's idea (p. 114) that *Mons Dolorosus* was inspired by *áywla* is at least as plausible.

ter to clear it out of the way first. As most writers have seen, *bregion* is the plural of OW. **breg*, MW. *bre* (pls. *breod* and *breon*), 'hill.' The translation usually given, "battle of the hills," is improbable however. Analogy is against a general description of this sort, and an actual place-name is required. Again, "battle of the hills" would be OW. *cat ir bregion*, MW *cat y breon*. *Bregion* is much more likely to be a place-name, meaning "Highlands." There is a *Din Breon*, "Fortress of Breon," mentioned in medieval Welsh poetry, though its whereabouts are unknown. This would be OW. **Din Bregion*. Lloyd-Jones (Part I, p. 73) and Ifor Williams (*Bulletin of the Board of Celtic studies*, VI, 134) suggest that this may be the site of *Cat Bregion*.

As for *Breguoin* and *Bregomion*, one or other or both are corrupt, since they must be copied from a common original. Assuming that *Breguoin* is the right reading, this would come from a Br.-Lat. **Bravēnium*, a name nowhere recorded.²⁹ Br.-Lat. *Bravonium*, Br. **Bravonion*, would develop in different ways according to the quantity of the first vowel. It would be reasonable to suppose that the *a* is long, and that the word is a derivative of the OC. stem **brāvon*- 'quern'; cf. OI. gen. sing. *broon* from OC. **brāvonos*, Mod. W. *breuan* from Br. **brāvan*-. One could imagine some local rock or other natural formation supposed to resemble a quern. But Br.-Lat. *Brāvonium*, Br. **Brāvonion*, would become OW. **Brouein* or **Brouin*, and OW. *Breguoin* cannot represent this. Assuming that *Bravonium* may have short *a*, this would give OW. **Breguein* or **Breguin*; the inferior reading *Bravinium* would give **Breguin*. It is possible that *Breguoin*, already suspected of corruption, may be a scribal error for *Breguein*; or it

could even be a spelling of *Breguin*; and so the identification with Leintwardine might be correct. The *Bravoniācum* of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, Kirkby-Thore,³⁰ would give OW. **Broueiniauc*, **Brouiniauc*, if the first *a* is long, and **Bregueiniauc*, **Breguiniauc*, if it is short; none of which could be *Breguoin*. The other reading of the Br.-Lat. name for Kirkby-Thore, mentioned above, is the *Brovonacis* of the Antonine Itinerary,³¹ wrongly given by Lot as an alternative name of the neighboring Brougham; this would give OW. **Brouonauc*, and could not be *Breguoin*. The *Inis Breguin* of the *Annals of Tighernach* (s.a. 727), referred to by Crawford (p. 289), is in Ireland (cf. E. Hogan, *Onomasticon goedelicum* [Dublin, 1910], p. 461), and is therefore irrelevant, apart from its phonetic impossibility. Lot's "evident" *Broccavo* (and recte *Broccavum*), Brougham,³² is quite out of the question; this would become OW. **Brogou* or **Brogau* according to the quantity of the *a*. However the -c- probably stands for -cc-, and the word contains OC. **brocco*-, 'badger,' which would give OW. **Brochou* or **Brochau*. Clearly then *Breguoin* cannot be Kirkby-Thore or Brougham; but if we emend to *Breguein* as suggested it might be Leintwardine.³³

All this depends on the assumption that *Breguoin*, or rather **Breguein*, is the right reading. But instead *Bregomion* might be correct. This would come from Br. **Bregomiones* or the like. No such British word is known, nor its etymology, but it cannot be connected with *Bravoni-*

²⁹ Cf. the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain; and E. McClure, *British place-names in their historical setting* (London, 1910), p. 105.

³⁰ Cf. McClure, p. 106.

³¹ Brougham is of course not itself derived from *Broccavum* (see Ekwall, *Dictionary*, s.v.).

³² Crawford (p. 289) calls *Breguoin* = *Bravonium* "obviously impossible." As just seen, it is possible philologically.

³³ Lot's factitious *Breguoin* would come from **Bravion*-.

um, *Bravinium*, *Brovonacis*, *Bravoniacum*, or *Brovacum*. The third possibility is that neither *Breguoin* nor *Bregomion* is right, but both are corruptions of a common original; which is certainly the most logical, as neither is easily explicable as a scribal corruption of the other. Seeing this, Anscombe suggested (p. 114) an original reading **Breguoinion*, which he seems to have intended to stand for **Breguinion*. He took this for *Bravonium*,³⁴ preferring the inferior form *Bravinium*, Leintwardine. This was adopted by Faral (p. 144) and misprinted **Breguoinion*. **Breguoinion* or **Breguinion* cannot come from *Bravonium* or *Bravinium*,³⁵ nor any other of the Roman-British names proposed, as already seen. Nevertheless, the emendation *Breguoinion* may possibly be the solution of the problem. In copying this, the reading *Breguoin* would merely have skipped the *-ion*; and *Bregomion* would have come about by dropping the *u* and misreading *in* as *m* by a very common scribal error. *Breguoinion* might itself be a mistake for **Bregueinion*, which could come from a Br. **Brāvoniones* or the like, a tribal name perhaps based on the same stem as *Bravonium* and *Bravoniacum*.

The results of all this are as follows: (a) *Breguoin*, if correct, is from **Bravēnium*, which is unknown. But (b) one may suggest very tentatively either that *Breguoin* may be a mistake for **Breguein*, which would represent *Brāvonium*, or that we should restore **Bregueinion*, from a hypothetical **Brāvoniones*. All this is very indefinite, and the real solution may be quite different. (c) The gloss *Cat Breion* perhaps refers to the place later called *Din Breon*, and is almost certainly independent of the *Breguoin-Bregomion* puzzle.

12. *in monte Badonis. N hadonis.*

This name is unique among them all because we know that there really was such a battle, that it was a British victory over the Saxons, and that it was fought about A.D. 500,³⁶ in Arthur's time; so much is clear from Gildas (*De excidio* 26), who calls the place *mons Badonicus*. He does not mention the British commander, and there is no very satisfactory reason to suppose that it was Arthur, though most of those who believe in his historicity accept the authority of Nennius that it was so. Quite possibly Nennius got the name from Gildas and inferred the rest.

OW. *Badon* (the *-is* is the Latin termination; the *-d-* is a spirant, [ð]) would come from Br. **Badon-* (with [d]). No such British name is known, nor any such stem, though the *-on* looks British enough. In medieval Welsh story *Caer Vadon*,³⁷ Mod. W. *Caer Faddon*, is Bath; but this is evidently an identification with the OE. name which probably was originally made by Geoffrey of Monmouth (ii. 10: "edificavit urbem Kaerbadum quae nunc Bado nuncupatur"). Various other equations have been proposed, such as the prehistoric hill-fort of Badbury Rings in Dorset; which, like Badbury in Wilts., Badbury Hill in Berks., Badbury in Northants., and Baumber in Lincolnshire, comes from OE. *Baddanbyrig*, *Baddanburg*, "Badda's Fort" (cf. Ekwall, *Dictionary*, s.v. "Badbury," "Badby"). The fact that a stem **badon-* is unknown in British might suggest that *mons Badonicus* is borrowed from *Baddanbyrig*;³⁸ but this is not likely at that period. A borrowing in the other direction might be possible, **Badon-byrig* being subsequently taken for "Badda's Fort" and turned into *Baddanbyrig*; but

³⁴ OW. *-(i)on* cannot represent Br.-Lat. *-(i)um*; see n. 14 above.

³⁵ In spite of Faral's "phonétiquement irréprochable."

³⁶ The exact date is a highly controversial point, but it was evidently some time between 493 and 516.

³⁷ See examples in Lloyd-Jones, Part I, p. 49.

³⁸ Intervocal lenition had probably not occurred, or was not complete, by ca. 500; so that an OE. *d* could be adopted and later become *ð* in Welsh.

since there are at least four of these it seems improbable, and moreover as Ekwall remarks it looks as if there were a legendary Saxon hero Badda associated with ancient hill-forts. Other proposed equations are made unlikely or impossible by their OE. forms, e.g., Lot's Bedwin (p. 70) and Johnstone's Banbury (p. 382; cf. Ekwall, *Dictionary*, s.v. "Bedwyn," "Banbury").

Skene's identification with Bowden Hill, West Lothian (pp. 57-58), is out of the question historically as well as linguistically (cf. A. Macdonald, *The place-names of West Lothian* [Edinburgh, 1941], p. 90). Anscombe (pp. 115-16), accepting the inferior reading of N, proposes to read *hagonis*, and compares this with his *Agon*. Thus *Agned* would be duplicated and *mons Badonis* would be a *vox nihili*. Counting his *Breguinion* as a separate battle from *Agned*, he is thus able to reduce the number to twelve. Faral (p. 144) very properly calls this "devoid of any basis," and Lot (p. 70) is even more positive. Faral, Collingwood, and Crawford attempt no identification.

It can at least be said that for historical reasons the battle of *mons Badonis* is probably to be looked for somewhere in central southern England.

Finally a note may be added on another famous battle of Arthur's, his last, which is not in the Nennian canon. The source is the tenth-century *Annales Cambriae* (ed. E. Phillimore, *Y Cymmrodor*, IX, 141 ff.; see p. 154), where it is called *gueith Camlann*, "the battle of Camlann." The common identification of this with Camelford on the river Camel in Cornwall (e.g., Lot, *Romania*, XXX, 16) rests on the worthless authority of Geoffrey of Monmouth (xi. 2). Ekwall (*River-names*, pp. 66-67) rejects it, and the early forms do not support it.

Crawford (pp. 289-90) makes the in-

teresting suggestion³⁹ that Camlann is the Roman fort of Camboglanna (Birdoswald) on Hadrian's Wall; and he felt sufficiently confident of this to include it in the Ordnance Survey Map of Britain in the Dark Ages. He points out that the most natural etymology for an OW. *Camlann* would be Br. **Cambolanda*, 'crooked inclosure,' an unknown name; but remarks that Camboglanna "comes very near it." He might have been more positive. Br. *Camboglanna* 'crooked bank,' would certainly become late OW. and MW. *Camlann*. In OW. of Nennius' time one would expect the -g- to be preserved in spelling, therefore **Camglann*; cf. OW. *Dubglas*, *Duglas*, from Br. **Duboglasso*-. But the *Annales Cambriae* are a good deal younger than Nennius; the spirant g was probably already ceasing to be pronounced, and a tenth-century scribe might have written *Camlann*, especially if he got the name from an oral source. Whether the identification is certain enough on other grounds to be canonized in the Map of Britain in the Dark Ages is perhaps a different question. After all, there may have been other "Crooked Banks," not to mention "Crooked Inclosures," in Roman Britain.

Birdoswald is accepted by R. G. Collingwood (*Roman Britain and the English settlements*, p. 324), who describes Camelford as "wild philology" (*ibid.*, p. 478). An attack has been made on this by A. G. Brodeur.⁴⁰ Quoting Collingwood's remark, he continues: "Crawford's identification is quite obviously much 'wilder philology.'" Since no reasons are given for this statement, there is no more to be said than that Brodeur is mistaken, and that *Camlann* = *Camboglanna* is philologically perfectly possible.

³⁹ *Camboglanna* was first proposed by Ekwall (*River-names*, p. 67).

⁴⁰ Arthur, *dux bellorum* ("University of California publications in English," Vol. III, No. 7 [1939]), p. 283.

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To sum up the results of this inquiry, out of the names *ostium fluminis Glein*, *flumen Dubglas*, *regio Linnuis*, *flumen Bassas*, *castellum Guinnion*, *urbs Legionis*, *litus fluminis Tribruit*, *silva Celidonis*, *mons Agned*, *Breguoin-Bregomion*, *Bregion*, *mons Badonis*, and *Camlann*, only two can be regarded as fairly certainly identifiable, namely, *urbs Legionis* = Chester and *silva Celidonis* = the famous Coed Celyddon somewhere in Scotland. Another, *Linnuis* = Lindsey, is probable. The rest are all conjectural or unknown; though there is some very slight reason to suppose that *Tribruit* is in Scotland, and *mons Badonis* is on historical grounds probably somewhere in the south. The *Breguoin-Bregomion* puzzle is too obscure to make any statement worth while. So far as phonetics are concerned, *Camlann* can be Birdoswald; *Dubglas* any one of the numerous Douglas, Dawlish, Dalch, and other such names; and *Glein* either the Northumberland or Lincolnshire Glen. Those who accept Lindsey for *Linnuis* may think this last significant.⁴¹ It is noteworthy that with the probable exception of *mons Badonis* none of these places is demonstrably in southern Britain.

Without entering deeply into the historical implications, one may remark that if genuine the wide distribution of these places scarcely agrees with the theory that Arthur was a local chieftain. Further, Scotland is hardly the place at this time for battles against the Teutonic invaders, nor is Chester. W. G. Collingwood was quite right to point out (p. 294), something which most people have ignored, that Nennius' words in introducing the battles seem to mean that he thought Arthur was fighting the Jutish kings of Kent;⁴² hence Collingwood's attempt to

locate them in Sussex. If Nennius was right, the fact that none of the identifiable places is anywhere near the Jutish area strongly suggests that they are spurious. If he was wrong, they might be genuine, but against various other enemies.

It looks very much as if, in writing about Arthur, Nennius or his source knew only that he had won twelve famous victories. Not having their names by any trustworthy tradition, and not bothering himself with scruples as to where they were, he searched his memory for any battles of olden time⁴³ about which he had vaguely heard⁴⁴—so vaguely that one of them was really a British defeat, the battle of Chester about A.D. 616, long after Arthur's time. This would be parallel with what he seems to have done with the tradition, learned from Gildas, that Britain possessed twenty-eight chief cities.⁴⁵ It should again be stressed however that we have independent confirmation in one case, *Tribruit*, that Welsh legend told of a battle fought there by Arthur's warriors.

Such a conclusion need not imply that there never was a real Arthur, nor that he was not more than a local chief. It would simply mean that in Nennius' time the tale that he won twelve victories did not include their names, or at any rate not all of them.

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⁴¹ The fact that there are really only nine battles, *Dubglas* being turned into four to make up twelve, may be due to scribal error at some stage; or Nennius may have been unable to think up more than nine names.

⁴² This would answer R. G. Collingwood's objection (*Roman Britain and the English settlements*, p. 322) that the uncertainty as to where the battles were is a proof of their genuineness, on the ground that a forger like Geoffrey would have put them in well-known places. They may well have been real battles, but hardly all Arthur's (if such a person existed at all), or of the fifth to sixth centuries, or all against the Saxons. The one with the best chance of being really Arthur's may be *mons Badonis*.

⁴³ Cf. *Antiquity*, XII, 53-54.

⁴⁴ Can Nennius have transposed the names *Glein* and *Dubglas*? This would be a rash guess, but an attractive one.

⁴⁵ So also Brodeur, p. 250.

THE WASTE LAND: A CELTIC ARTHURIAN THEME

WILLIAM A. NITZE

I WILL show you fear in a handful of dust" is the dramatic, modern form which T. S. Eliot has given the theme I propose to consider. In reality it merits a book, not an article. But the few remarks about it here are inspired by Cross's references to its counterpart, Mag Mell, Tír Tairngire, Tír na n-Oc, in the admirable glossary to his and Slover's *Ancient Irish tales*.

"Only the Celts," said A. C. L. Brown (*Origin of the Grail legend*, p. 7), "knew a Happy Other World (Mag Mell, 'Honey Plain'). . . . By various adjustments to churchly requirements the Irish kept their pagan mythology alive down almost to our day." And Loomis, I think, is right in interpreting W. *Annwn* originally as "the land of faery" and maintaining (*PMLA*, LVI [1941], 897): "In only one instance is it said that human beings at death go to the *síd* and even here . . . [they] go . . . as kinsmen of the immortals. . . . The inhabitants of the Irish and Welsh Other World are the 'ever-living ones.'" But the contrasting idea of destruction is never really absent. It appears in the Fomorians and their names of "sinister meanings," and the eighth-century *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* (Brown, pp. 169-70) is replete with the idea, as seen in the three reds who ride the horses of Donn Descorach ("The Dark-One with Falling Teeth")¹ because they wrought falsehood

¹ Kuno Meyer (*Sitzungsberichte* [Berlin Academy], XXXII [1919], 538) argued that Donn was originally the Irish *Totengott*. Brown (p. 257) regards the passage cited as additional support of that theory. It should be said, however, that the theory is based on the assumption that "a taboo rested upon Middle-Irish scribes" to suppress mention of him, hence "no trace of Donn's sinister origin has been allowed to appear in *LG* [the *Lebor Gabála*]." Further, Brown ad-

i sídib, "in the elf mounds," and are punished by the king of the elf mounds. Thus they destroy what they should have fostered.

Two Irish texts, especially, establish this contrast between the Tuatha Dé, the *dei terreni*, the undying, beneficent ones, and the destructive and ephemeral race of giants. These are: (1) *De gabáil int Sída* ("The seizure of the Fairy Hill") (cf. Brown, pp. 71 ff., and Thurneysen, *Helldensage*, p. 604):

Even after the Sons of Míl conquer Ireland, the power [of the Dagda] is great, for the Tu-

mits (p. 260 n.) that there also existed a tradition which made Donn "a fairy king." Moreover, a sinister or "dark" quality is associated with the Fisher King, who is not a *Totengott* (cf. *Elucidation*, vss. 220 ff.):

La court au riche Pesceour
Qui moult savoit de nîngremance
Qu'il muast .c. fois sa semblance,

and the "black fisherman working at his tricks" in Campbell's *Popular tales of the West Highlands*, III, 24, as well as the Ensorcelled Prince, who goes under the name of King of the Black Islands, in the *Arabian nights* (Burton, I, 62 ff.). On the Welsh Don, see Loth, *Mabinogion*², p. 176 n. On the whole question cf. Loomis' just remarks (p. 896).

Another interesting character is Partholón (= Bartholomaeus filius suspenditis aquas, according to Isidore *Etym.* vii. 9. 16), occurring in the Fourth Invasion of the *Lebor Gabála* (Brown, p. 262). Van Hamel (*Rev. celt.*, L [1933], 220 ff.) shows that he is a fertility demon or corn spirit. The Fomorians, he says, are "the untamed forces of nature" like the Scandinavian *landdættir*; their opponents are the friendly demons, the Tuatha Dé. Partholón's enemy is Cichol Grígenchos, which last epithet Brown (p. 263) refers to his "single foot." Geoffrey of Monmouth (*HRB*, p. 292, ed. Griscom) calls the former *Partholoim*. In modern Irish folklore he survives as *Páirthanán*: "The Day of Páirthanán comes a short time before the end of the Harvest, and everybody tries to have his crops mown before the coming of this day, as Páirthanán is said to go round threshing the corn, not leaving one grain on the corn that would not have been mown." Obviously, Van Hamel is justified in seeing behind this version of the Invasions the old conflict between the destructive and the beneficent nature powers—however much the characters are confused.

tha Dé [themselves] destroy the corn and milk of the Sons of Míl, till they make the friendship of the Dagda. The Dagda divides the fairy mounds of Ireland among the princes of the Tuatha Dé. Wonderful truly is that land. Three trees with fruit are there always, and a pig eternally alive, and a roasted swine, and a tankard with marvelous liquor, and never do they all decrease.

How characteristically Irish this statement is! (2) *Acallam na senórach* ("The colloquy of the elders") (cf. Thurneysen, p. 48, and Loomis, pp. 896-97):

St. Patrick exclaimed: "It is a wonder to us how we see you two: the girl young and invested with all comeliness; but thou Caeilte, a withered ancient, bent in back and dingily grown grey." Caeilte replied: "Which is no wonder at all, for no people of one generation or of one time are we: For she is of the Tuatha Dé Danaan [from the faery mound of Crúachain], who are unfading and whose duration is perennial; I am of the sons of Milesius, that are perishable and fade away."

Note Loomis's remarks (p. 879) on how "significant" this statement is.

If anyone still doubts that the Celtic Other World is a land, not of the dead (originally) but of the living, let him re-read Cross's article in the *Manly anniversary studies* dealing with the passing of Arthur and the *Táin Bó Fráich* (see, now, Byrne and Dillon, *Etud. cell.*, III [1937], 8):

The women gather around him, and bear him away into the elf-mound of Crúachain. In the evening they saw a strange thing: he comes, surrounded by fifty women, quite healed without defect or blemish. . . . He went into the fort (*dún*). All the hosts rose up to meet him, and welcomed him as if it were from another world he had come.

Obviously, neither Fróech returning from Crúachain nor Arthur expected from Avalon² had been in a Land of the Dead.

² On *Aballō*, "city of apples," the proper authority to follow is Vendryes, *Mémoires de la société linguistique*, XIII (1905-6), 387—an explanation accepted without reservation by Pedersen (*Vergleichende Grammatik*, II, 108). This reference should be added to J. J. Savage's valuable contribution to the whole question in *Transactions of the A.P.A.*, 1942, pp. 405 ff.; cf. *Perlesvaus*, II, 55, where Slover gives the correct, scientific explanation, as he does (p. 143) of the *porcus Troit*.

The Tuatha Dé, as Nutt long ago realized, are gods or rather demons of fertility and increase—like Adonis, Attis, Tammuz, Es(h)mun (see, now, Brown's admission, p. 30)—and the "blight" which the land suffers is variously explained by the circumstance that they have in some way been slighted or directly attacked by powerful adversaries, such as the Fomorians.

Turning now to Arthurian romance, we find that the *Perlesvaus* (II, 166, note to l. 1689) makes the most imaginative use of the Waste Land theme. There the Grail country is, like the Irish *sid*, always fertile (*planteive*)—thanks to the presence of the Fisher King (Ir. Nuadu). But the rest of the land is affected by the failure of the rites at the Grail Castle (l. 4920): *cette gaste terre . . . est li commencement de Logres*. *Logres*—standing for England south of the Humber—is W. *Lloegyr*, Latinized as *Loegria*. Chrétien's *Conte del graal* (vss. 6169 ff.) has a significant passage about it:

toz li reaumes de Logres,
Qui ja dis fu la terre as ogres,
Sera destruite par cele lance.

The reader should consult Hilka's elaborate note on this passage (esp. p. 734). It is clear that *ogres* are, in the words of Baist, "die höhlenbewohnenden Riesen"—in short, the equivalent of the Irish Fomorians. The "lance" in question is the Bleeding Lance, which in Chrétien is the special object of Gauvain's quest, as that of the Grail is Perceval's. When in the Pseudo-Wauchier part of the poem (see Heinzel,

Gralromane, p. 28) Gauvain has asked about the Bleeding Lance:

N'estoit pas plus que mienuit
Le soir devant, que Dex avoit
Rendu issi com il devoit
As aiges lor cors el país;
Et tout li bos, ce m'est avis,
Refurent en verdor trové,
Si tost com il ot demandé.

So, in the *Elucidation* (see Thompson's ed., p. 98):

Le jor que la cours [Grail Court]
fu trovee,
Furent par toute la contree
Les forés si grans et si drues
Et si bieles et si creües
Que trestout cil s'esmervelloient
Qui parmi le país erroient—

although there the "blight" had been caused by the attack of Amangons—one of the giants—on the Damsels of the Wells (cf. p. 89):

Li roiaumes si agasti
K'ains puis n'i ot arbre fuelli;
Li pré et les flor[s] essecierent
Et les aiges apeticierent,
Ne on ne peut puis trover jor
Le cort au rice Pescheour
Qui resplendissoit le país
D'or et d'argent, de vair, de gris.

On this Brown (p. 429) comments: "In French, to restore the prosperity of the land, the court of the vanished Fisher King must be found. In Irish, how the people found the vanished Tuatha Dé is not told, but it is said that the sons of Míl were obliged 'to make peace with the Dagda,' before they could enjoy the corn and milk of Ireland." Hence, while there is not room here to discuss again the concomitant ideas of illness and enchantment (wounding) and disenchantment (vengeance) and cure, I believe they are variant forms of the same underlying folk belief. Even Heinzel, who, on the basis of the French romances, said that the cure

of the Fisher King was the original motif which he thought was replaced in the later versions by the motif of vengeance and the amelioration of the land, has to admit (p. 70):

An sich wäre es ein glaubliches Motiv, dass durch Frevel an wohlthätigen Naturgeistern das Land verödet und die Burg eines ihnen verwandten Wesens, des zauberischen Fischerkönigs verschwindet, sowie dass die Fruchtbarkeit wiederkehrt, wenn die Burg dennoch von einem kühnen Helden gefunden wird.

This brings us to the famous Grail question (*cui l'an an sert*), on which I must refer the reader to my last article in *MLN*. Let me add, however, that, according to Chrétien (vs. 6415), the answer is not the Fisher King but his father or "double"—the nameless figure whom I have sought (*Rom. rev.*, XXXIII [1942], 97–104) to identify with the Cronos (Cernunnos)³ of Plutarch and who reappears in the *Perlesvaus* (l. 9571) as the silent but ever living (*tot vif*) knight in the *tonel de voirre* (cf. Loomis, pp. 925 ff., on the Fortress of Glass and the Silent Sentinel). It is significant that Chrétien, wishing to Christianize him, lets the *oïste* ('host') in the Grail sustain him. Originally,⁴ he may

³ Another interesting figure is the Cromm Cruach appearing in the *Dinnsenchas* of *Mag Slecht*, ed. Kuno Meyer in *The Voyage of Bran*, Vol. II, Appen. B (see Nutt's commentary, pp. 149 ff.; also Henderson, *Survival in beliefs among the Celts*, p. 254). G. Lane (*Language*, VIII [1932], 296 ff.; cf. *Etud. celt.*, IV, [1937], 408) points out that *cromm*, W. *crwm*, 'bent,' 'curved' (cf. Gr. *σφαῖρος*), is apparently the meaning: which may associate—so I think—Cromm with Brown's (p. 340) idea of the squatting or bent god. In any case, the text says:

Milk and corn
They [the Gaels] would ask from him speedily
In return for one third of their healthy issue:
Great was the horror and the scare of him.

Finally, see *Etud. celt.*, III (1937), 193.

⁴ It is characteristic of Wolfman that he is explicit: Den aller schoensten alten Man.

On the role of the "sleeping" fairy king see Loomis, *MP* (1941), pp. 296 ff. As for Cronos, Plutarch (*De defectu oraculorum* 18) records that "around him are many deities, his henchmen and attendants"—to which have been compared the twelve "smaller idols"

have been the unchanging chthonian divinity (*Erdegeist*); as Baudissin (*Adonis und Esmun*) makes clear, "er [*κρόνος*] ist der Alte, weil er immer war." In contrast to him are the Fisher King and the Adonis, Attis, Tammuz, etc., of the Mediterranean cults. They have to be "revived" or "cured" or "appeased"—for, as Baudissin (p. 13) adds, they belong to the "volkstümlichen Weltanschauungen . . . wie sie wohl überall in altem Volksglauben vorkommen," which corresponds to Zimmer's hypothesis that the Tuatha Dé were *dei terreni*, as Cross (p. 609) says: "Perhaps originally earth gods."

Hence, if the Grail in Chrétien has little connection with the Fisher King—except as a symbol of fruitfulness—the French poet is explicit (vs. 3511) as to the Fisher King's wound:

. . . il fu navrez d'un javelot
Parmi les hanches anbedeus.⁵

that surround Cromm Cruach. Henderson (p. 202) reminds us of the stone-cult so general "in the Celtic area." "Elsewhere (Arnobius, *Contra gentes*, vii, 49)," he adds, "a stone may represent the image of earth as the common Great Mother." See Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. "Kronos," where (§ 9) the cult of Kronos as *Erntegott* is analyzed (§ 16 on human sacrifices offered him). As for the "sleeping" Kronos, § 38 points out that Plutarch's account (*De facie in orbe lunae* 26) "recalls [wohl nicht zufällig] the Orphic story in which the imprisoned Kronos gives Zeus the main ideas for world-order, and there we find the account not only of the castration by Zeus but also of the sleeping Kronos"—a motif that is not regarded as *alt-griechisch*. A good summary of the evidence in western Europe is given by Loomis, *Celtic myth*, p. 323. Merlin in his *Esplumoir* (*Speculum*, XVIII [1943], 67 ff.) belongs to the same category of ideas.

⁵ The information on the wounding of the Fisher King is more extensive than can be shown here. One or two points, however, may be stressed: (1) In the Irish *Serglige* (Brown, p. 24), Labraid reports that the fairy king is *créchtach a thóeb*, "wounded his side"; on *crécht* see, now, G. Lane (*Language*, XIII [1937], 24), who connects it with OE *scrincan*, 'wither, dry up, shrivel'; ON *skrá*, 'dry piece of skin'; MHG *schrä*, 'dry, lean, wretched.' The semantic progression from 'dryness (i.e., 'waste')' to 'misery' or 'illness' is thus apparent. (2) Manessier's account of Partinal of the Red Tower (cf. Partholón, *Páirthanán*, in n. 1) in the *Conte del graal* (vss. 34935 ff.) is worthy of further study (cf. Mary Williams, *Essai sur la composition du*

Indeed, the Welsh *Peredur* (which lacks the Fisher King's father) explains that he was wounded by the Sorceresses of Gloucester and that *Peredur* is to avenge him. But Wolfram von Eschenbach (*Parzival*, § 479, 12), as I have pointed out before, states the precise nature of the wound: *durch die heidruose sin*, like the relatively late *Sone de Nausai*:

Es rains et desous l'afola,
De coi grant dolour endura.

If the reader will consult Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*, s.v. "Adonis" or "Attis," he will learn that both of these creatures "emasculated" themselves beneath an "evergreen" and therefore belong to the category of *Vegetationsdämonen*. We can hardly assume that Wolfram read this meaning into his text; it must have been present in the source on which he drew.

Thus it is clear that the Waste Land (*Gaste Terre*, *Gaste Chastel*, *Gaste Cité*, *Gaste Manoir*, etc.) refers to the desiccating and harmful effect produced by the absence or enmity of the demons of increase and fertility—the Irish Tuatha Dé.

roman gallois *Peredur*, pp. 48 ff.) and should be compared with the Pseudo-Borron (*Huth Merlin*) account of Garlan (Malory's Garlon, *Mabinogion's* Gwrnach, and *Perlesvaus's* Gurgalon). Manessier brings out the following points: (a) Partinal kills Goon (W. Gwynn ab Nudd?) Desert, brother of the Fisher King; (b) the latter wounds himself *parmi les gambes en travers* with a splinter of Goon's sword; (c) Perceval kills Partinal, cuts off his head, and thus cures the Fisher King. In Pseudo-Borron: (a) Balin is entertained by a Hospitable Host whose son is wounded at noon by Garlan; (b) the latter rides invisibly and is said to be a Red Knight—he is slain by Balin, who seeks to cure the son with his opponent's blood; (c) Pellehan interferes and in the struggle with Balin is wounded in the thighs by the Bleeding Lance.

Miss Williams sought to connect the Manessier story with that in the *Peredur* (cf. also Rhŷs, *Arthurian legend*, pp. 118–21).

As for Adonis, the reader will recall how Shakespeare (following Ovid) describes the wounding (*Venus and Adonis*, vs. 1115):

And nuzzling in his flank, the loving swine
Sheath'd unaware the tusk in his soft groin.

It is a temporary state, corresponding often to their shape-shifting nature.⁶ That they are generally connected with the "water" is significant. Chief among them are the Dagda (the "Good God," with his never failing cauldron), Nuadu (W. *Nudd*, Goth. *nuta*, rendered by Gr. ἀλιεύς, our 'Fisher King'), Manannán and Bran, sons of Ler⁷—and, of course, their many Welsh counterparts. Not every "head-on-a-platter" (cf. *Peredur*) can be compared to the head of Adonis-Osiris as it floats into Byblos or to that of Dionysos at Lesbos; but the head of Bran (cf. Welsh *ysbydau urdual henn*, "hospitality of the noble head"), which, being cut off when Bran is wounded, keeps his friends company during eighty years and then is buried in the White Hill of London, must have a similar regenerative meaning—not unlike the head of Mimir, in the ON *Heimskringla*, which when severed from the body still imparts wisdom to Odin.

⁶ Cf. Hartland, *Mythology and folktales* (London, 1900), pp. 20 ff. I agree with Cross (*AJTh*, XXIII [1919], 373): "The traditional view . . . that the Tuatha Dé Danaan . . . were originally gods [in the usual sense] is open to question." On the shape-shifting character of the famous Green Knight, see *MP*, XXXIII (1936), 353 ff., and Vendryes' comment in *Etud. celt.*, IV (1937), 365.

⁷ On a Manannán mac Allót in the *Dinnshenchas* (*Tuag Inbhir*) see Thurneysen, pp. 516 ff. "Er lebte," according to Thurneysen, "auf Aran-Insel, die Emain Ablach ('die an Apfelbäumen reiche') heisst." Attempt to explain Allot through Lludd and Nudd (*Nuadu*) appear futile. That Allot has anything to do with Gr. ἀλιεύς is likewise improbable; Gr. ἀλς appears as Ir. *salann*, W. *halen*, Br. *haloin*.

In conclusion, the Waste Land is the reverse of Tir Tairngire, the Land of Promise. The latter is not a kind of Hades, a classical or Christian Elysium to which human beings go after death, though this concept inevitably is mingled with it later on. Even the ME *Lay of Sir Orfeo*, so admirably analyzed by Kittredge (*AJP* [1886], pp. 176 ff.), shows how the classical realm of the dead is made over in the Middle Ages into a *land of fairy* (vs. 560), typical of the Celts. In *Sir Orfeo*, as elsewhere, the Other World is the abode of the ever living fairies—whom *Perlesvaus*, II, 193, still designates as "the little people" (*basse gent*)⁸—the well-spring from which the pagan Irish believed the fructifying power of nature came. The *sid*-folk, the hill-dwellers, are still potent in Ireland today. Wherever they are friendly to man, there is no Waste Land. But beware of them when they are offended!

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⁸ Of these, Pellés is king, on whose identity with W. *Pwyll* see once more my notes 37–38 in *Perlesvaus*, Vol. II. The word is Ir. *ciall*, 'sense' or 'understanding.' W. *puyll*, Br. *poell* (see Lewis and Pedersen, *Concise comparative Celtic grammar*, p. 352)—in Mod. Eng. *peller* or *pellar*, 'exorcist, wizard, conjurer.' Thus he is obviously akin to the Tuatha Dé. Loomis (*MP*, XXXVIII [1941], 292 ff.) identifies him correctly with Chrétien's Bilis in *Erec* (vs. 1993):

Bilis, li rois d'Antipodes

De tox nains fu Bylis li mendres.

The author of the *Perlesvaus* (see Table, II, 190) merges him with Chrétien's Hermit Uncle, Wolfram's Trevrizent—a typical Christianization.

THE COMBAT AT THE FORD IN THE *DIDOT PERCEVAL*

ROGER SHERMAN LOOMIS

THE reader of Arthurian romance is likely to feel after a time as if he were a child turning a kaleidoscope. The patterns are charming and ever changing, but the bits of colored glass which make the patterns remain the same. What is the explanation of this monotony, this recurrence of the same situations and motifs?

A theory which enjoyed and still enjoys great favor among the scholars of England, France, and the United States is that a sort of paralysis of the imagination overtook the poets and prose-writers of the thirteenth century, and they repeated endlessly the *données* of Chrétien, Pseudo-Wauchier, Wauchier, and Robert de Boron. Speaking of the Vulgate romances, M. Lot gave witty expression to this view:

Que de "mehaignés"! Josephé, frappé à la cuisse, son père, Joseph d'Armathie, à la jambe; Caleb Alfassam, transpercé d'un "glaiue" en travers des cuisses; de même Pellehan, le père du roi Pellès; Nascien, aveuglé un instant; Mordrain, aveuglé et paralysé pour plusieurs siècles. La vengeance divine est peu variée dans ses manifestations. ... Ce procédé de doublets et triplets, si commode pour les auteurs fatigués, a l'inconvénient de donner à une œuvre d'apparence variée une grande monotonie.¹

According to this view, which also dominates Bruce's *Evolution of Arthurian romance*, the four French poets of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries were the only really creative artists in the Arthurian tradition, inventing nearly all the motifs and plots of the *matière de Bretagne*. After them came only sterile

imitators, "auteurs fatigués," who repeated because they could not think of anything better.

Another hypothesis, however, has its adherents. It detracts from the originality and fertility of the first romancers and points out that Chrétien himself repeated such motifs as the Perilous Bed and the ignominious overthrow of Keu.² It interprets these repetitions and those of the later romancers as due, not so much to barrenness of imagination, however, as to reverence for tradition. The romancers, from Chrétien on down, were not incapable of invention, but they shared the respect of all medievals for the heritage of the past. They were limited by this heritage of oral and written legend. Originality they displayed in the combination, motivation, and interpretation of old narrative patterns, not in the modern sense of inventing new ones. The monotony of the Round Table legends is due to the restricted number of Celtic stories which filtered through to the Breton *conteurs* and proved adaptable to French audiences.

Neither of these two views is held in quite the absolute form in which I have presented them. Those who, like Bruce,³ believe that Arthurian romance was largely the product of the fancy of the first French poets nevertheless concede that certain recurrent motifs, such as the Beheading Test, were not invented but inherited from the Celts. On the other hand, those who believe in the traditional

² *Chevalier de la Charrette*, vss. 474-538; *Conte del Graal*, ed. Hilka, vss. 7692-7848; *Erec*, vss. 3957-4054; *Chevalier de la Charrette*, vss. 259-69; *Conte del Graal*, vss. 4274-4319.

³ J. D. Bruce, *Evolution of Arthurian romance* (Baltimore and Göttingen, 1923), I, 72-94.

¹ F. Lot, *Etude sur le Lancelot en prose* (Paris, 1918) pp. 269-71. On the other repetitions characteristic of the Vulgate cycle cf. *ibid.*, pp. 262-71.

Celtic origin of most of the themes of Arthurian romance would readily concede that in certain instances the poems of Chrétien, Robert de Boron, Pseudo-Wauchier, and Wauchier were the direct or indirect sources of later romancers—French, German, English, Italian, and so forth. The question is, therefore, a matter of degree: To what extent were both the earlier and the later romancers indebted to antecedent Celtic tradition? To what extent were the later romancers merely repeating the narrative patterns of their French literary predecessors, and to what extent were they drawing upon cognate versions which came to them orally through the Breton *conteurs*⁴ or through manuscripts⁵ long since lost?

A final answer to this basic question can be given, of course, only when all the important stock situations and motifs of the Round Table cycle have been thoroughly and satisfactorily examined, and that lies a long while in the future. Nevertheless, progress has been made. It will be granted by all that the Beheading Test was not the invention of the author of the *Livre de Caradoc*, the Tristan legend was not the invention of Chrétien or some anonymous French predecessor, the ab-

duction of Guenevere in its many forms did not originate with the *Chevalier de la Charrette*. The studies of Kittredge, Gertrude Schoepperle, and Professor Cross have demonstrated Celtic sources for all these famous themes.⁶ Professor Newstead's work on *Bran the Blessed in Arthurian romance* and my own researches on the Perilous Bed motif, the Grail cycle, and the legends of Morgain la Fée⁷ should add to the body of material which we can safely attribute, not to the creative imagination of the first French poets, but to the influx of Welsh and Irish stories through Breton channels. More and more evidence, therefore, accumulates in favor of the second hypothesis; more and more clearly it appears that the multitude of maimed or languishing kings, the repeated abductions of the unfortunate Guenevere, the singular recurrence of names beginning with Bran, and the other monotonies so characteristic of the *matière de Bretagne* are due not so much to the meager inventive faculties of the romancers as to the restrictive force of tradition. In the following pages I hope to add one more to the number of narrative patterns of Celtic origin.

It has been noted by several scholars that one of the stock incidents of Arthurian romance is a combat of the hero with one or more redoubtable antagonists at a ford. It occurs first as Erec's encounter with the robber knights;⁸ other important examples occur in Wauchier, *Diu Krone*, *Le Bel Inconnu*, Malory's Book of Gareth, *Historia Meriadoci*, *De ortu Walwani*,

⁴ On the part of the Breton *conteurs* in the dissemination of Celtic matter cf. *MP*, XXXIII (1936), 232-37; *RR*, XXXII (1941), 4-26.

⁵ The names "Baudemaguz" and "Ban de Gomeret" are to be explained only as due to scribal corruption (cf. H. Newstead, *Bran the Blessed in Arthurian romance* [New York, 1939], pp. 134, 145 n.; Romania, LXIII [1937], 383 ff.). The Welsh Bran the Blessed had his palace at Aberffraw, the ancient royal court of North Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis, *Descriptio Cambriae*, ed. J. F. Dimock, p. 169). The Welsh word for North Wales—*Gwynedd*—would be written by a Frenchman *Goiñet* (cf. Fouke Fits Warin, ed. L. Brandin [Paris, 1930], p. 94, sub "Goynex"). The -in- could be mistaken easily for m, and the stroke over the n mistaken for the sign for er. Professor Roach very kindly pointed out to me that Potvin in his *Perceval le Gallois* (Mons, 1866-71), III, 88, vs. 8, made the reverse error, reading *Goinnec* for *Gomerec*. Only as a result of some corrupt manuscript reading could Chrétien have written "Ban de Gomeret" instead of "Bran de Goinnet." Note, moreover, that Chrétien acknowledges that a book was the source of his *Conte del Graal* (vs. 67).

⁶ G. L. Kittredge, *Study of Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, Mass., 1916); G. Schoepperle, *Tristan and Isolt* (Frankfurt and London, 1913); T. P. Cross and W. A. Nitze, *Lancelot and Guenevere* (Chicago, 1930).

⁷ *PMLA*, XLVIII (1933), 1005, 1011-18; *Speculum*, VIII (1933), 415; Vol. XX (1945), 183.

⁸ Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec*, vss. 2795-3085, particularly vss. 3030-40. That this was originally a combat at a ford appears by comparing it with the ford combats in Malory's Book of Gareth and *Le Bel Inconnu*, cited in the next note.

and *Lanzelet*.⁹ Kindred versions, though not strictly Arthurian, are found in the *Lai de l'espine* and the Scottish poem, *Eger and Grime*.¹⁰ A thorough study of

these stories and their interrelationships would require a monograph. I must confine myself to the version in the *Didot Perceval*, which Professor Roach has recognized as "obviously more primitive" than that given by Wauchier¹¹ and in which Jessie Weston pointed out some traces of Celtic matter. I hope to establish the fact that in this romance, which must have existed, in verse-form at least, by 1212, the ford episode is made up of Welsh materials, represented in Welsh texts, all but two of which antedate the year 1100. Let me summarize:

In the course of his search for the house of his grandfather Bron, Perceval came to a ford beside a beautiful meadow and watered his horse. From a pavilion beyond the water a knight sallied out but, before encountering Perceval, bade a damsel provide the intruder with a shield and lance. At the first shock Perceval hurled his antagonist to the ground and then subdued him with his sword. The strange knight identified himself as Urbain, son of the Queen of the Blackthorn (*le roïne de le Noire Espine*), and told the following history. One tempestuous night Urbain spied a damsel riding on a mule (MS D, 'a palfrey') at a great speed. He followed and tried to overtake her, but the night was black, and only by the flashes of lightning could he keep her in sight. He followed her into one of the most beautiful castles in the world. There she welcomed him and consented to become his mistress. He was to defend a ford near the invisible castle, and now he was within eight days of completing a year of delight with the damsel and her maidens. But he was vanquished, and it was for Perceval now to defend the ford for a year. Perceval refused. Suddenly there was a great tumult, and from the noise issued a smoke and thick darkness. The voice of Urbain's mistress was heard, cursing Perceval and calling on Urbain to flee or he would lose her love. The unfortunate knight tried to ride off but was held back by Perceval. A flock of large black birds swooped upon Perceval and tried to peck out his eyes, and Urbain, inspired with new courage, attacked him.

¹¹ *Didot Perceval*, ed. Roach, p. 71.

⁹ Potvin, Vol. IV, vss. 24160-24421; Heinrich von dem Türlin, *Die Krone*, ed. G. H. F. Scholl (Stuttgart, 1852), vss. 3356-5083, 8843-8925; Renaud de Beaujeu, *Le Bel Inconnu*, ed. G. P. Williams (Paris, 1929), vss. 322-588, 965-1226; Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*, Book VII, chaps. v-vii; *Historia Meriadoci and De ortu Waluani*, ed. J. D. Bruce (Baltimore and Göttingen, 1913), pp. 20-25, 85-88; P. Piper, *Höfische Epik* (Stuttgart, n.d.), II, 186. There are, of course, other combats at fords in Arthurian romance (cf. Potvin, vss. 11,110 ff., 20,633 ff., 37,105 ff.; H. O. Sommer, *Vulgate version of the Arthurian romances* [Washington, 1908-16], III, 140-42, 197 ff., 203 f., 214, IV, 216 f.; Chrétien de Troyes, *Chevalier de la Charette*, vss. 714-934); but none of these seem to be dominated by the pattern observable in the romances listed. For comments on the ford combat cf. Cross and Nitze, p. 54, n. 6; *MP*, XII (1915), 604, n. 1; *Didot Perceval*, ed. W. Roach (Philadelphia, 1941), 70-73; *Celtic review*, III, 148; *Historia Meriadoci*, ed. Bruce, pp. lvi-lviii; *JEGP*, XLII (1943), 170-76.

¹⁰ *Zeitschr. f. rom. Phil.*, XVIII (1893), 246-55; *Eger and Grime*, ed. J. R. Caldwell (Cambridge, Mass., 1933). It should be noted that Bérout (*Tristan*, vss. 1320 f.) mentions "le Gué Aventuros, et iluec a une aube espine," that the *Merveilles de Rigomer* mentions twice (vss. 7040, 9433) the "Gués de Blance Espine," and that Chrétien (*Yvain*, vs. 4705) mentions the death of "li sire de la Noire Espine." The last mentioned is evidently identical with Lanure, whom Gawain vanquished at a ford, according to Heinrich von dem Türlin's *Die Krone*, vss. 8853-925. Note also that Perceval's opponent at the ford (*Didot Perceval*, ed. Roach, p. 196) was son of "le roïne a le Noire Espine"; that Gareth after his victory at the river passage (Malory, Book VII, chap. vi) came to a black "launde," where there was a black hawthorn; that Arthur's opponent, Gasozein, in *Die Krone* (vss. 3424 f.) haunts "den vurt vür Noirespine"; and that the Percy Folio version of *Eger and Grime* twice (vss. 1406, 1457) gives the name "Loosepine" to the faery lady who healed Eger after his combat at the ford and who later married Grime, the victor at the ford. The ballad, "Sir Cawline," which is certainly akin to *Eger and Grime*, as Professor Hibbard (*Mediaeval romance in England*, p. 317) pointed out, places the eerie combat with the eldritch knight near a thorn tree on the moors. There is much evidence to show that thorn trees near wells were regarded by country folk in Wales and Cornwall as sacred late into the nineteenth century (cf. J. Rhys, *Celtic folklore, Welsh and Manx* [Oxford, 1901], I, 355, 361 f.; M.A. Courtney, *Cornish feasts and folk-lore* [Penzance, 1890], pp. 32 f.). Very apposite is the statement by W. G. Wood-Martin (*Traces of the elder faiths of Ireland* [London, 1902], II, 156): "When it [the whitethorn] grows alone near the banks of streams, or on ferts, it is considered to be the haunt and peculiar abode of the fairies." Cf. also *ibid.*, II, 22, 81, 88, 96. This belief in the connection of a magic thorn tree with springs or fords must surely be responsible for the persistent association of the ford combat with an espine.

Things were going badly until he struck down one of the black birds. She turned at once into a lovely woman and was carried off dead by the other birds. Pressed for an explanation, Urbain revealed that the birds were his mistress and her maids and that the noise and the tumult was the destruction of her magic castle. The slain bird was his mistress' sister, but all was well since she was now in Avalon. With Perceval's permission Urbain departed, leaving his horse, and soon after he was carried away with the greatest joy, and the horse too disappeared. "Et quant Percevaus le vit si le tint a grant merveille."¹²

It is no wonder that Professor Roach recognized the primitive nature of this tale or that Nutt remarked: "This incident stands out pre-eminent in the Didot-Perceval for its wild and fantastic character. It is a genuine Celtic *märchen*, with much of the weird charm still clinging to it that is the birthright of the Celtic folk-tale."¹³ Miss Weston, however, was the only scholar to make a definite connection with Celtic tradition. Let me quote:

The distinctive feature of our story is the appearance of the lady and her maidens under the form of birds. . . . So far as I have been able to discover, this power of assuming bird form appears to be somewhat closely connected with Avalon. In the *Vita Merlini*, Geoffrey, speaking of the "Insula Pomorum quae fortunata vocatur" (i.e., Avalon), and the nine sisters who bear rule there, says of the chief of them, Morgen,

Ars quoque nota sibi qua se it mutare figuram
Et rescare novis quasi Daedalus aera pennis.

In the *Prophecies of Merlin* we find Morgain sending her messengers in the form of birds to convey the Dame d'Avalon to her presence.¹⁴ Here the dead Bird-maiden is carried to Avalon; the connection can hardly be fortuitous.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 195-202.

¹³ A. Nutt, *Studies on the legend of the Holy Grail* (London, 1888), p. 129.

¹⁴ *Les prophéties de Merlin*, ed. L. A. Paton (New York and London, 1926), I, 416. According to Hartmann von Aue (*Erek*, ed. M. Haupt [Leipzig, 1871], vss. 5177 f.), Famurgan, the *gotinne*, could fly through the air.

A parallel to the rôle here played by the maidens is found in Owen's army of ravens in *The Dream of Rhonabwy*. So far as the action is concerned the parallel is extremely close. Owen's birds "with one sweep descend upon the heads of the men,—they seized some by the heads, and others by the eyes, and some by the ears, and others by the arms, and carried them up into the air, and in the air there was a mighty tumult with the flapping of the wings of the triumphant ravens." Here, Perceval "vit entor lui si grant plenté d'oisiaus que tous li airs entor lui en fu couvers, et estoient plus noir qu'onques rien qu'eüst veüe, et li voloient parmi le hiaume les uels esracier de le teste." In *D.* [the Didot MS] the birds are "grans, corsuz, et plus neirs que errement." All this corresponds closely with the ravens of the Mabinogi.¹⁵

Thus far Miss Weston. We can go further and link up the tradition of the metamorphosis of Morgen and her sisters into birds with the tradition of Owain's ravens. According to several texts, Morgain was the daughter of a King Avallo or a certain Avalloc, and she was the mother of Yvain by Urien.¹⁶ She therefore has her counterpart in the Welsh Modron, who, according to a triad, was the daughter of Avallach and the mother of Owain by Urien.¹⁷ Putting together the evidence, we discover who Owain's ravens, who battled so fiercely with the knights of Arthur, were; they were his mother, Modron, and her sisters, the daughters of Avallach, in bird form. The statement in the *Didot Perceval* that the wounded Bird-maiden was carried off, not to the isle of Avalloc, but to Avalon ("or ces eures est ele en Avalon") is due to the common misinterpretation by the French of the Welsh *ynis Avallach* (i.e., the isle of Modron's father, Avallach) as *isle d'Avalon*, a place-

¹⁵ J. L. Weston, *Legend of Sir Perceval* (London, 1906-9), II, 207 f.

¹⁶ *Romanic review*, XXIX (1938), 176 f.

¹⁷ J. Loth, *Mabinogion*² (Paris, 1913), II, 284.

name.¹⁸ The truly Celtic nature of this transformation of Morgain and her sisters into bellicose black birds was confirmed by another reference of Miss Weston's to the ferocious and vindictive Irish goddess, the Morrigan, who took many shapes, including that of a crow.¹⁹ That there were many points of resemblance between Morgain and the Morrigan was demonstrated by Miss Paton and Zenker,²⁰ and it is therefore most significant that in the *Cattle-raid of Cooley* the Morrigan, like a female Proteus, assumed many shapes when she attacked Cuchulainn during his combat with Loch at a ford and was wounded severely by him.²¹ Being healed by magic, she flew away in the form of a crow and lighted on a whitethorn bush, which thereafter was called the White-thorn of the Crow.²² Thus Irish traditions of the Morrigan; Welsh traditions of Modron, her son Owain, and his ravens; and the French tradition of Perceval's combat at the ford with Urbain and his black birds—Morgain and her sisters—are intimately related.

The antiquity of this material can be judged by the fact that the saga of the *Cattle-raid* is assigned by the best Irish scholars to the eighth century.²³ And

¹⁸ On the original meaning of Avallach and its relation to Avalon cf. *Romanic review*, XXIX, 176 f.; *PMLA*, LVI (1941), 920; J. Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian legend* (Oxford, 1891), pp. 335 f. Rhys's suggestion that Avallach was "a dark divinity" forms a part of his classification of the Celtic gods, which is accepted, I believe, by no one.

¹⁹ Weston, II, 208. On the Celtic battle-goddesses and their transformation into crows, cf. *Revue celtique*, I, (1870-72), 32-57; *PMLA*, LVI (1941), 5 f., 12.

²⁰ L. A. Paton, *Fairy mythology of Arthurian romance* (Boston, 1903), pp. 11 f., 21-24, 148-66; *Zeitschr. f. franz. Sprache u. Lit.*, XLVIII (1925-26), 82-92; cf. Cross in *MP*, XII, 605, n. 4.

²¹ R. Thurneysen, *Die irische Helden- und Königsage* (Halle, 1921), p. 169-74.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 176 (bottom), n. 1: "Nach ihrem Hohn fliegt sie als Krähe auf den Weissdorn über Grellach Dolair, der daher Sge na h-Enche ar Murthemul heisst."

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 112. The detail of the crow on the whitethorn belongs, however, to the third version, which was not written down until the thirteenth or fourteenth century (*ibid.*, p. 147).

though the *Dream of Rhonabwy* may have been composed as late as the thirteenth century,²⁴ Nutt was right in asserting that "the distinguishing feature of the story, the raven army of Owen, is surely very old."²⁵

We have another Welsh story of Urien, Modron, and their son Owain in a text written down about the year 1556.²⁶ It is thus translated by Professor T. Gwynn Jones:

In Denbighshire there is a parish called Llanferrys, and Rhyd y Gyfarthfa (the Ford of the Barking) is there, and in olden times the dogs of the country would come there to bark, and no one would venture to go to see what was there until Urien Rheged came. And when he came to the ford, he saw nought but a woman washing. And then the dogs stopped barking, and Urien took hold of the woman, and had possession of her. Then she said, "The blessing of God upon the feet that brought thee here." "Wherefore?" he asked. "Because," she said, "it is my destiny to wash here until I have a son by a Christian, and I am the daughter of the King of Annwn. Do thou come here at the end of a year, and thou shalt have the son." And so he went and got a son and a daughter, none other than Owain ab Urien and Morfudd, daughter of Urien.²⁷

In spite of the lateness of the record, there can be no doubt of the antiquity of this material also. It harmonizes with the triad which lists among the three blessed births of the Isle of Britain "Owein, fils d'Uryen, et Morvudd, sa sœur, en même temps dans le sein de Modron, fille d'Avallach."²⁸ It parallels three Irish traditions of the Morrigan, all of which antedate the

²⁴ J. Gwenogvryn Evans, *White Book Mabinogion* (Pwllheli, 1907), p. xxv.

²⁵ C. Guest, *Mabinogion*, ed. A. Nutt (London, 1904), p. 346.

²⁶ Text in J. G. Evans, *Report on manuscripts in the Welsh language* (1898), I, 911; trans. in *Aberystwyth studies*, IV (1922), 105.

²⁷ T. Gwynn Jones, *Welsh folklore and folk-custom* (London, 1930), p. 107.

²⁸ Loth, II, 284.

year 908:²⁹ she came in the form of a beautiful young woman to a ford, announced herself as the daughter of King Buan, and offered Cuchulainn her love; she was a washer at a ford; she appeared to the god Dagda as a woman washing at a ford and mated with him there.³⁰ The Welsh tale must be in essence very old and serves to explain why Urbain's mistress should be represented as dwelling with her lover in an invisible palace beside a ford.

The association of Modron with a river-crossing is perhaps older than any other feature of her story, for Celtic mythologists are agreed that her name is derived from that of the goddess Matrona, who was widely worshiped from Cisalpine Gaul to the Rhine Valley and who gave her name to the Marne and other rivers in Gaul.³¹ Matrona's character as a water-divinity seems to have descended to Modron and even to Morgain, whom Étienne de Rouen in the *Draco Normannicus* (1167-69) called "nympha perennis."³²

²⁹ Kuno Meyer in *Fianaigeacht* (Dublin, 1910), pp. xviii f., dates *Reicene Fothaid Canainne* in the late eighth or early ninth century. The *Táin bó Cualnge* ("Cattle-raid of Cooley"), we have seen, goes back to the eighth century. The *Second battle of Mag Tured* is dated before 908 (*Zeitschr. f. celt. Phil.*, XVIII, 80, 89).

³⁰ Thurneysen, pp. 169 f.; Meyer, p. 17; T. P. Cross and C. H. Slover, *Ancient Irish tales* (New York, 1936), p. 38. On the Washer of the Ford cf. G. Schöpperle, *JEGP.* XVIII (1919), 1-7; E. Hull, *Folklore of the British Isles* (London, 1928), pp. 59 f.; Jones, p. 107; *Aberystwyth studies*, IV, 108 f. On Irish traditions of meeting a supernatural woman at a ford cf. Cross in *MP.* XII, 604-8.

³¹ Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of religion and ethics*, III, 292; Celtic review, III (1906), 48; J. Rhys, *Lectures on the origin and growth of religion as illustrated by Celtic heathendom*³ (London, 1892), p. 29; Jones, p. 17; *Cymmrodor*, XLII (1930), 140. On the Matronae cf. *Speculum*, XX (1945), 200 f., and the bibliography there given.

³² E. K. Chambers, *Arthur of Britain* (London, 1927), p. 265. Hartmann von Aue, in his *Erek* (vs. 5179), speaks of Famurgan as able "ôf dem wäge und drunder leben." In the Provençal romance of *Jaufré* (ed. H. Breuer [Göttingen, 1925], vss. 8378-9288, 10346-10676) there is an elaborate account of "la fada del Gibel" (Morgain) as dwelling in the fairest land in the world at the bottom of a spring. The mistress of Guingamor, who Chrétien (*Erec*, vss. 1954-58)

The original divinity of Modron was also recognized in curious ways. In the tale translated above, she called herself "daughter of the King of Annwn," the land of the Welsh gods. Her Arthurian counterpart, Morgain, was referred to by medieval writers not only as *la Fée* but also as *dea*, *déesse*, *goddess*, *gotinne*, and *Margan dwywes o annwfn* ("goddess from Annwn").³³ Apparently, however, Modron's heathen origin was so notorious in Christian Wales that her name was frequently suppressed, even though stories about her continued to circulate and to be firmly believed.³⁴ As a character *under her own name* she never plays a part, so far as I know, in Welsh story, though she is, of course, mentioned in *Kulhwch* as the mother of Mabon, who was taken from her when three nights old.³⁵ The story of her union with Urien in the sixteenth-century manuscript permits no doubt as to her identity but leaves her anonymous.

An even more remarkable suppression is, I believe, to be detected in the first of the *Four branches of the mabinogi*, that treasury of Brythonic myth and folklore,

tells us was Morgain, is described in the *lai* as bathing naked in a spring (*Marie de France, Lais*, ed. Warnke [1925], p. 247). On Morgain as a sea nymph cf. Paton, *Fairy mythology*, p. 251. On water fays in Irish literature cf. Cross in *MP.* XII, 599-610.

³³ R. S. Loomis, *Celtic myth and Arthurian romance* (New York, 1927), p. 192; Chambers, p. 272; W. J. A. Jonckbloet, *Roman van Lanceloet* ('s Gravenhage, 1849), II, lxi; *Gawain and the Green Knight*, ed. J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon (Oxford, 1925), vs. 2452; Hartmann von Aue, *Erek*, vs. 5161; Ifor Williams, *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi* (Cardiff, 1930), p. 100. The form "Margan" has probably been influenced by the name of the famous Glamorganshire abbey, Margan (Giraldus Cambrensis, *Opera* ["Rolls Series"], VI, 67).

³⁴ Rhys, in his *Lectures on the origin and growth*, p. 423 n., shows that the famous fairy lady of Little Van Lake was probably Modron. On the Welsh lake ladies and their relation to Modron, cf. *Speculum*, XX (1945), 194-202.

³⁵ Loth, I, 312, 323-28, 343. On the story of Mabon's imprisonment cf. *Cymmrodor*, XLII (1930), 129-47. Mabon, son of Modron, also is mentioned as Uther Pendragon's man in the Black Book of Carmarthen (Chambers, p. 64).

dating probably from the eleventh century. I believe it is possible to identify Modron with the nameless wife of Arawn, king of Annwn, whose palace lay not far from the River Cuch, the northern boundary between the counties of Carmarthen and Pembroke. One reason for suspecting that this Otherworld queen was no other than Modron is the fact that her husband Arawn was the leader of the Wild Hunt in *Pwyll*,³⁶ as he was still in recent times, according to Welsh folk-belief,³⁷ whereas Adam de la Halle informs us that Morgue la Fée (Modron's counterpart) adopted as her lover Hellekin, the leader of the *chasse furieuse*.³⁸ If we may equate Hellekin with Arawn, then we may equate Arawn's wife with Modron. A more cogent argument for this equation lies in the fact that Arawn's nameless wife is linked to a situation strongly reminiscent of that which the *Didot Perceval* attaches to Urbain's mistress, the fay of Avalon. We learn from the mabinogi³⁹ that Arawn had been unsuccessful in mortal combat at a ford with Hafgan, another king of Annwn. He met Pwyll, prince of Dyfed, in Glyn Cuch, persuaded him to fight Hafgan a year later at the ford, and in return transformed Pwyll into his own shape and sent him to his palace near by, to dwell there for the intervening year with the privilege of sleeping each night with his most beautiful queen. Pwyll spent the year with all delights and diversions, ex-

cept that he denied himself the favors of the queen. At the year's end he encountered Hafgan at the ford and slew him. He then met Arawn, resumed his own form, and returned to his dominions. I have shown elsewhere that this is a partially euhemerized version of the annual conflict between summer and winter, which has left other clear traces in Welsh legend and folk ritual and has even influenced *Gawain and the Green Knight*.⁴⁰ For us the important point is the resemblance of this episode to the adventure of the Perilous Ford. In both *Pwyll* and the *Didot Perceval* we have a faery palace near a river; in both we have a mortal (Pwyll, Urbain) dwelling with a fay in the palace; in both we have stress laid on the obligation of the mortal to engage in combat at a ford; in both the term of office is a year. In view of the already accumulated evidence for the Celticity of Perceval's adventure with Urbain and his mistress, one can hardly ascribe these parallels to accident. Urbain's mistress being Morgain, her counterpart in *Pwyll* must be Modron.

If it be objected that Pwyll met the Otherworld queen under circumstances quite different from those under which Urbain met his faery mistress, and therefore the parallel breaks down, it is only necessary to turn on to the next episode in the mabinogi to find the correspondence we need. Let me summarize:⁴¹

Pwyll, sitting on the Mound of Narberth, saw a damsel riding by, and after twice sending a squire in vain to summon her, he pursued her himself on his swiftest horse and urged it to its limit of speed.⁴² Being unable to overtake her, he implored her to wait for him, and she readily complied. He perceived that no woman could compare with her for beauty, and when she declared her love for him, he agreed to marry her at the end of the year.

³⁶ *JEGP*, XLII, 170-81. ⁴¹ Loth, I, 92-98.

⁴² On faery horses which cannot be overtaken cf. Cross and Slover, p. 101.

³⁸ Loth, I, 84 f.

³⁷ M. Trevelyan, *Folklore and folk-stories of Wales* (London, 1909), pp. 48, 53; *JEGP*, XLII, 174-76. On the Wild Hunt cf. also *MP*, XXXVIII (1941), 289, n. 2, 299 f.; *Kölner anglistische Arbeiten*, IV (1929), 61-66; *Yale Romanic studies*, XXII (1943), 21-28; Stith Thompson, *Motif-index of folk-literature*, E501.

³⁹ A. Rambeau, *Die dem Trouwre Adam de la Hale zugeschriebene Dramen* ("Ausgaben u. Abhandlungen aus d. Gebiete d. romanischen Philologie," Vol. LVIII [1886]), pp. 91 f. M. Gustave Cohen identified Morgue and her two companion fays of Adam's play with the Matres of Gaulish mythology (*Roman courtois au XIIIe siècle* [Paris, 1938], p. 64).

⁴⁰ Loth, I, 84-92.

Compare this with Urbain's account of his meeting with the fay, as it is given in the Didot manuscript:⁴³ "Si vi devant moy chevauchier une des plus beles damoiseles qui oncques fust, et s'en aloit mult tot sor un palefroi. Et si tot come je la vi, je m'arostai après et la suï." (The Modena manuscript adds: "'et me penai molt de li ataindre.'") When Urbain followed her into the castle, she showed him every hospitality and readily consented to become his mistress. Though some of the parallels between Pwyll's and Urbain's adventures may be commonplace, not every mortal lover meets his faery lady riding a horse so swift that he cannot overtake her and then discovers that she is more than willing to reciprocate his sudden passion. It seems fairly obvious that the chief difference between the story of Urbain and his love and the story of Pwyll and Arawn's wife is due to the absorption of another romance of Pwyll's, his pursuit and wooing of Rhiannon.

There is, perhaps, another reason for the blending of the two Welsh legends besides the fact that Pwyll was the mortal hero of both adventures. Whereas the faery lady in one is identifiable with Modron and is descended from the famed Celtic goddess Matrona, meaning "the Great Mother," the other faery lady is called Rhiannon, a name which Celtic scholars derive phonologically from a hypothetical Rigantona, meaning "the Great Queen."⁴⁴ Both names therefore originated as divine titles and were perhaps applied to the same divinity.⁴⁵ Be that as it may, there were strong tendencies toward syncretism in the mythology of the Celts, as Professor Robinson and others have discerned.⁴⁶

Circumstances would therefore favor what is common enough in any case—the exchange of attributes and legends between one goddess or fay and another. Moreover, it is worth noting that the name Rhiannon contains the same Celtic root as does the second element in the name of Modron's Irish counterpart, the Morrigan.⁴⁷ There was surely a basic kinship between these Celtic goddesses.

Whereas the *Dream of Rhonabwy*, the tale of Urien, and *Pwyll* offer significant analogies to the *Didot Perceval* account of Urbain and his mistress and the encounter at the ford, the mabinogi of *Manawydan*, probably of the same date as *Pwyll*, offers two other curious parallels. When the faery castle of Urbain's mistress was destroyed, we read: "Si [Percevaus] of une si grant tumulte que il li sambla que toute li forés fondist en abisme. Et de cele noise qui si grans estoit si issi une fumee et une si grans tenebrors qui li uns ne pot veïr l'autre. . . ." ⁴⁸ Later Urbain explained: "Or saces que li noise que tu oïs et la tumulte si grant, saces que ce fu li castiaus a me demisele qu'ele depeça. . . ." Compare this with a passage in *Manawydan*, describing the desolating enchantment which overtook the land of Dyfed (South Wales): "Un grand coup de tonnerre se fit entendre, suivi d'un nuage si épais qu'ils ne pouvaient s'apercevoir les uns les autres. La nuée se dissipa et tout éclaircit autour d'eux. Lorsqu'ils jetèrent les yeux sur cette campagne où auparavant on voyait troupeaux, richesses, habitations, tout avait disparu, maison, bétail, fumée, hommes, demeures."⁴⁹ Though in the *Perceval* it is a magic castle which is destroyed and in the mabinogi it is the

⁴³ Ed. Roach, p. 197.

⁴⁴ *Cymmrodor*, XLII, 140.

⁴⁵ This was the contention of Professor Gruffydd in the article cited in the preceding note.

⁴⁶ Hastings, IV, 409.

⁴⁷ On derivation of Morrigan cf. Paton, *Fairy mythology*, pp. 158 f.

⁴⁸ Ed. Roach, p. 199.

⁴⁹ Loth, I, 154 f.

material buildings which vanish, yet the accompanying circumstances are the same: a roar and a cloud of smoke so thick that no person can see another.

A second remarkable parallel occurs at the end of *Manawydan*. It will be remembered that the mistress of Perceval's enemy transformed herself and her sisters into birds and attacked him, that he wounded one of them, and thus forced Urbain to reveal who these creatures were. In the mabinogi we have a strangely similar story.⁵⁰ Manawydan's wheat crop had been devoured on successive nights, and, determined to discover the perpetrators, he watched until midnight. He perceived an army of mice and, striking at them, succeeded in wounding one and capturing it. The next day he went to the Mound of Narberth, whence he had witnessed the sudden desolation of Dyfed, and there proceeded to hang the mouse. He was interrupted successively by a clerk, a priest, and a bishop, who turned out to be three forms of his enemy Llwyd. In vain Llwyd pleaded for the life of the mouse; but, when Manawydan proved adamant, Llwyd confessed that the captured mouse was his own wife and the others were the ladies of her court.⁵¹ He promised to remove the enchantments from Dyfed, the mouse was set at liberty, and when Llwyd struck her with a wand, she turned into the most beautiful of women. It is hardly necessary to point out that, except for the substitution of

mice for blackbirds and the consequent change in the form which their hostility took, the Welsh and the French texts tell much the same tale. The hero is involved in a conflict with an enemy; the wife or mistress of that enemy and her ladies transform themselves and make war on the hero; he strikes one of them down; she reverts to human shape; the enemy yields and discloses that this belligerent female is his own wife or his mistress' sister.

The Perilous Ford adventure in the *Didot Perceval* reveals itself on examination as a mosaic of plots and motifs which in different combinations are found in the *Four branches of the mabinogi* and in other Welsh tales which, though recorded centuries later, give internal evidence of their antiquity. The world is the world of Brythonic paganism, in which mortals mate with river-nymphs, the summer spirit and the winter demon fight an annual battle at a ford, crows and mice are but malevolent supernatural forces in disguise. To find this world mirrored in the *Four branches* is, of course, no new discovery. Matthew Arnold, to mention no earlier critic, published in 1867 his *Study of Celtic literature*, declaring that the characters of the *Mabinogion* "are no mediaeval personages; they belong to an older, pagan, mythological world." It is surprising, however, to find that even in the tarnished mirror of thirteenth-century French romance the magic and the wonder are still vividly discernible.

Clearly, then, the oft repeated pattern of the combat at the ford was no invention of Chrétien's; clearly, it was a heritage from Welsh mythology; clearly, the repetition of the motif by the French romancers was due, not to a lack of inventive power, but to that universally recognized characteristic of the medieval mind—reverence for tradition.

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⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 163-70. There is a remarkable analog (though with different dénouement) in a modern tale from Westmeath (cf. Rhys, *Celtic folklore*, I, 124).

⁵¹ It is a curious fact that the hounds of Annwn in modern folk tradition were frequently called the "Hounds of the mothers" (*Cwn mamau*) and sometimes appeared as mice (Jones, p. 203). Ranulph Higden reports a strange legend of an island near Anglesea inhabited by hermits (Holyhead Island?), where any dissension among the hermits was followed by an assembling of mice to eat their food (Higden, *Polychronicon*, ed. C. Babington ["Rolls Series"], I [London, 1865], 426).

GREATER IRISH SAINTS IN LAWMAN AND IN ENGLAND

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IN AN article, "Irish costume in Lawman,"¹ the present writer has shown that this splendid epic poet was well acquainted with Ireland, as is shown by his knowledge of the armament of the Irish and their dress in war and peace. Here first in English appears a lifelike glimpse of Ireland. From a far longer work now finished on the legendary history of Britain I develop another indication, almost as clear, that he knew Ireland. This is a short passage showing his acquaintance with its saints, the three contemporaries in the great days of early Christian Ireland—Columba, Brendan, and Brigid or Bride, of the fifth and sixth centuries, who never appear in Wace, his source; that he makes them already saints with relics in King Arthur's day, which is too early for all but Brigid, does not signify, for Lawman attends to chronology even less than Wace and Geoffrey of Monmouth do.

It is true that all these saints were mentioned in England and Wales before him. "Nennius" mentions Brigid and Columba (besides Patrick); Bede's *Historia* and Henry of Huntingdon have Columba as a figure in English history; William of Malmesbury has none of them in his *Gesta pontificum*, has Brigid only in the *Gesta regum*, and in his *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesiae*, where Patrick

looms large, Brigida and Columkilla also appear as having visited that unscrupulous house, the former having left relics and also, it is hinted, perhaps the latter.² Though Brendan's earlier vogue was more purely Irish than the others', all three appear repeatedly in the Latin works of Lawman's Welsh contemporary, Gerald de Barri, who knew Ireland intimately. Later collections of legends in English, edited by Carl Horstmann, have especially Brigid, sometimes Brendan, but rarely Columba; Caxton's translation of the *Legenda aurea* has only Brendan; the Latin *Nova legenda Anglie*, credited to John Capgrave, has all three.

Such British vogue as Columba had is explained by his historical position as the converter of northern Britain, contemporary with Augustine in the south. As to the others, since the appeal of saints' legends was largely (though not wholly) romantic and gave women and the like what others got from *chansons de geste* and some romances, Brendan's appeal may be ascribed mainly to his truly marvelous

¹ *Patr. Lat.*, CLXXIX, 1690-91. In this article I have relied most on Charles Plummer's splendid editions, *Vitae sancti. Hibern.* (2 vols.; Oxford, 1910), and *Lives of Irish Saints* (2 vols.; Oxford, 1922); Whitley Stokes, *Lives of saints from bk. of Lismore* (Oxford, 1890); the *Acta sanctorum*; S. Baring-Gould's human and semisolarly *Lives of the saints* (16 vols.; Edinburgh, 1914); the *DNB*; and the *Catholic encyclopedia*; besides Carl Horstmann's various editions of legends in English and also of the *Nova legenda Anglie*, ascribed to John Capgrave (Oxford, 1901). I refer also to the intensely interesting *Les Saints successeurs des dieux* by E. D. Nourry (Paris, 1907). See also the bibliography in Plummer's *Miscellanea hagiogr. Hibern.* (Brussels, 1925), pp. 181-86, 237-41, etc. The best starting-point for anything on the early Irish church, including saints, is J. F. Kenney, *Sources for the early hist. of Ireland* ("Records of civilization series" [Columbia University Press, 1929]), Vol. I: *Ecclesiastical* (no more published). I can only hope, not being a Celtist, that my control of the large literature on the Irish saints has not been too inadequate.

² "Royster memorial studies," in *SP.* XXVIII, 55-61. Here the suggestion was made that we should adopt the spelling of his name in the later MS of his poem, *Historia Britonum* (commonly called "*Brut*"), for reasons of convenience and accuracy: "Lazamon" is pedantic—too archaic, almost unpronounceable, and unspelling; "Layamon" suggests a wrong etymology and has no right pronunciation; "Lazamon," which even today turns up at times, is merely laughable. If the poet had had due appreciation, perhaps he would have got a better modern name already.

voyage and to the account of it in the ninth- or tenth-century *Navigatio S. Brendani*³ and its derivatives, which had such international fame; but I cannot forbear to recall another of his marvels—his casual meeting on the high seas with St. Finnbar of Cork, Brendan riding a whale and Finnbar riding St. David's horse.⁴ The greater appeal of Brigid in Britain may be a reflection of the deep tenderness in Ireland for her, "lady of Ireland," "the Mary of the Gael" (as her legend calls her), shown dramatically by the perpetual fire maintained at her shrine in Kildare until 1220; may also be due to her earliness, her association with Patrick, her combined purity and strength, as shown also in secular literature, where she sometimes shows forceful but less amiable traits probably derived from a heathen goddess of like name. There was no specially appealing early British woman-saint. Even among miracles in Irish saints' legends, some of hers stand out for imagination, not to say grotesqueness. Both Latin and Irish lives of Brendan⁵ tell of his witnessing from a coastal cliff a desperate combat between two sea monsters, of which one adjured the other in a human voice to spare him in the name of St. Brigid and was allowed to make off; in the *Early South-English legendary* we read that, after tending her sheep, she came home with wet clothes and hung them to dry on a sunbeam;⁶ her prayer to be made

unattractive to males is answered by one of her eyes liquefying down her cheek but being restored after her profession as nun. Not only Brigid's miracles, Irish saints' legends in general, with their high imagination and primitive freshness, shine by comparison with most early legends, especially those of fourth-century Rome, which set the pattern for the species. The fact is that the Irish legends were composed by superior men in a civilization which was on its way up, the Roman by mediocre men in a high civilization which mostly was deteriorating. Whatever the cause, the earliness of Brigid's honor in England is attested by other than literary evidence. This is partly in English place-names, noticeable in J. Bartholomew's *Survey gazetteer* and E. Ekwall's more expert *Oxford dictionary of English place-names*, which have few or no likely derivatives of Brendan and Columba in England but quite a number of Brigid, especially in the west, including St. Bride's Bay, south of St. David's; and we may also remember Bridewell, "St. Bride's Spring," in London, whose later history would have pained the saint. Another testimony is the large number of English and Welsh churches dedicated to her;⁷ in contrast with Brendan, who has only two dedications, and Columba with thirteen and even Patrick with only nine, she has twenty-one in England and Wales, almost all pre-Reformation and all in the west except St. Bride's Church in Fleet Street, London.

One should not enter hastily and unadvisedly on the subject of the saints swarming in the Isle of the "Saints," a title the implications of which were so

³ An excellent and learned article by W. F. Thrall deals with Brendan's voyage (*Manly anniversary studies* [Chicago, 1923], pp. 276-83); see also A. C. L. Brown's article, *Manly anniversary studies*, pp. 295-99.

⁴ Gerald de Barri, *De Vita S. Davidis*, *Works of Giraldus Cambrensis* ("Rolls series"), III, 394.

⁵ Plummer, *Vitae*, I, 143, and *Lives*, II, 83; Stokes, p. 199.

⁶ Ed. C. Horstmann ("Early Eng. Text Soc., O.S." [1887]), p. 193; Baring-Gould, II, 19. This same miracle is told also of the English St. Milburga. For the third miracle above I refer merely to Gerald de Barri's *Gemma eccles.*, *Works* ("Rolls Series"), II, 268,

etc. For the sunbeam miracle see also Stith Thompson, *Motif-index of folk-literature* (University of Indiana, 1932-36), III, 194-95.

⁷ Frances Arnold-Forster, *Studies in church dedications* (London, 1899), III, 344, 349; II, 147-57.

different in different ages, as were the qualifications for receiving it. Originally merely *sanctus*, vaguely "holy" by common consent, later a saint was put in the canon by the local bishop, and after many vicissitudes in the process it was not until the seventeenth century that the court of Rome fully took over canonization. In early days and especially in Celtdom, almost any strong and enterprising churchman might soon acquire the halo; indeed, the person behind the cult was not always actually even a Christian, had not always even existed. There are said to be some fourteen St. Brendans, of whom Brendan of Birr is second in prominence to Brendan "the Navigator" of Clonfert; there were several Irish Brigids, one of them called a saint, contemporary with her of Kildare (not to mention St. Brigit of Sweden); there was also a second Irish St. Columba.⁸ But no doubt the three in Lawman's mind were they of Clonfert, Kildare, and Iona, though it hardly matters.

One more preliminary. The knowledge of these and other Irish saints in early Britain just shown here may give a totally false impression of their conspicuousness in twelfth-century England. Even at a time when hagiolatry played so large a part in popular religion, these few Irish were thinly diffused in an immense cloud of saints scriptural, early Roman and Italian, French or otherwise Continental, Welsh, Scandinavian, and Anglo-Saxon. Picking out the few Irish for discussion gives an air of a pattern not visible in the twelfth century. The rather realistic Lawman merely preferred appropriate saints even if little known among his auditors in England.

⁸ Plummer, *Vitae*, I, xc, and *Lives*, II, 384, and *passim*; Stokes, pp. 190, 370; *Cath. encycl.* On the making of a saint may I refer to "Saint Amphibalus" in *California essays in criticism* (2d ser., 1934), pp. 249-577.

To come now to his poem: when King Arthur invades Ireland, the poet adds much to Wace,⁹ showing both kindness toward Ireland and knowledge of it. After the conquest, which is more humanely accomplished than the Norman conquest of it in Lawman's day, Arthur is most friendly, gracious, and liberal to the Irish King Gillomar (II, 515-20), who responds in kind—he will hold Arthur "for hahne king," which may perhaps refer to "Ard-ri," the title of the Irish suzerain over other kings; and he promises—

ich wulle nimen halidom
of seint Columkille, þe dude godes iwille,
and seint Brændenes hæfed, þe godd seolf
halegede,
and seinte Bride riht fot, þe hali is and swiðe
god,
and halidomes inoze, þe comen ut of Rome,
and swerien þe to soðe swiken þe þat ich nulle
(II, 517-18; not in Wace).

Further, King Gillomar had earlier (II, 301; not in Wace) sworn by St. Brændan. These three names were never picked up in England. Among the enormous number of popularly or officially canonized persons in the Isle of the Saints, it is needless to say that easily the chief are Columba, Brigid, and Patrick (instead of Lawman's Brændan)—the "Trias thaumaturga" of John Colgan's so-named work (1647), who are constantly associated with each other.¹⁰ Patrick is the first saint who would come to the mind of an informed man who did not know Ireland well. It is hard to say why Lawman, who

⁹ Ll. 9906 ff., in De Lincy's edition, ll. 9669 ff. in Arnold's in the "Soc. des anc. textes franc." For Lawman, of course, Sir Frederick Madden's admirable edition is used (*Lazamon's Brut*), cited by volume and page.

¹⁰ P. W. Joyce, *Social hist. of anc. Irel.*, I, 507; *Misc. of the Celtic Soc.*, ed. J. O'Donovan (Dublin, 1849), p. 148; G. Keating, *Hist. of Irel.*, I, 78 (*Ir. Texts Soc.*); Gerald de Barri, *Top. and Exp. Hib. Works* ("Rolls series"), V, 163, 387.

I think did, here puts Brendan (who would doubtless come fourth); but it is worth noting that Columba, Brigid, and Brendan of Clonfert represent the north, east, and south of Ireland, which were the parts most familiar to the English in Lawman's day. Columba is patron of the O'Neills, chief family of Ulster, and historically belongs to Ulster; Brigid is special patroness of Leinster and one of four patrons of Kilkenny, familiar to the invaders;¹¹ Brendan is associated with Kerry and thereabouts in the south. The length of Ireland is measured by Gerald de Barri from the mountains of St. Brendan to the isle of Columba.¹² A modern writer of fiction (Donn Byrne, *Blind Raftery*) singles out these three together from all Irish saints. As to Columba, the first noticeable thing is that his name is in the form which has always been usual in Ireland, practically universal in English and Gaelic, and elsewhere scarce and mostly due to Irish influence.¹³ Brigid's name appears as "Bride," the usual early English form, a natural reproduction of the medieval Irish pronunciation; since her written name in Latin and Irish is always Brigida, Brigit, Bhrighid, or the like, the poet plainly got it by hearing,

¹¹ *Trans. Kilk. Arch. Soc.*, II, 220.

¹² *Top. Hib.*, p. 24, and see p. 125.

¹³ In Latin, Columkillus, Columba, or Columbanus (*Acta sanctorum*, XXII, 181); and see Stephen White's *Apol. pro Hib.* (Dublin, 1849); *Annales Cambriae* ("Rolls series"), pp. 4, 5, "Columcille"; both forms in MSS of "Nennius" and mentioned with Brigid and Patrick; Columchille in *Cartul. Quimperlé* in Brittany; like forms in Gerald de Barri's *Expugn. Hib.*, and in the Welshman, Adam of Usk; among the English, in Bode's *Hist. ecol. gentis Angl.*, "Columcellus" once as a secondary form; Columcille in a charm (*Leechdoms* ["Rolls series," Vol. I], p. 395); similarly in William of Malmesbury, *De antiq. Glasc.* (*Patr. Lat.*, CLXXIX, 1691, and see *PMLA*, XVIII, 479); "Columkille" in a description of Britain in a MS of Galmar ("Rolls series," Vol. I), p. xxxix; as a secondary form in Higden's *Polychr.* ("Rolls series," Vol. V), pp. 302-4; Colmekill for Iona in *Macbeth*, Act II, scene iv, l. 33, and its sources. These are all the non-Irish cases I find, with an infinity of instances of "Columba."

not by reading. It is clear that the selection of these three mutually contemporary saints, from the early days of Christian Ireland but with vast continuing vogue, shows familiarity with Ireland.

Halidom, of course, means 'relic'; but in the precise relics mentioned by Lawman there may be no special significance, except with Columba's. That this is not specified as part of his body is probably because his two most famous relics are his crozier, called his *Cathbuaidh* ('Battle-victory'), and more specially a silver case containing half of a psalter, according to tradition and perhaps actually copied by him, called his *Cathach* ('Battler'), preserved in the Royal Irish Academy since 1843. Both were carried in battle to secure victory¹⁴ and would be known of by a man familiar with Ireland—the Cathach being perhaps the most famous of all Irish relics—but would hardly be specified, being unintelligible to foreigners. The relics of the others are less explicable. Brendan's head, a precious relic, gives orders to build a church in *Pfaffe Amis*¹⁵ (thirteenth-century German but, of course, with Irish background). His face so shone in the later part of his life that only one man could look at it.¹⁶ His head recalls also the marvelous head of Bran the Blessed, who has an undetermined relation to Brendan, in the mabinogi of Branwen. Water in which Brigid's feet had been washed cured a sick woman, according to her legend; she healed the lame

¹⁴ Kenney, I, 629-30; *Jour. Roy. Soc. of Antiquaries of Irel.*, XIV, 357, and XXXII, 81; *Annals of Ulster* (Dublin, 1887-1901), III, 421, 445. See also Gerald de Barri, *Top. Hib.*, p. 179; Stokes, pp. 176-79; Plummer, *Vitae*, I, clxxv f.; also G. H. Orpen, *Irel. under Normans* (Oxford, 1911), I, 54, and II, 30; also, on the Cathach, *Life of Columcille*, ed. A. O'Kelleher and G. Schoepperle (Chicago, 1918), pp. 182-85, xiii.

¹⁵ A. Nutt, *Leg. H. Grail* (London, 1888), p. 265; A. C. L. Brown, *Origins of Grail* (Cambridge, 1943), p. 287.

¹⁶ Stokes, p. 250; Plummer, *Lives*, II, 46; Baist in *Rom. Forsch.*, XXII, 628.

(among others) and heals the feet.¹⁷ In 1185 there was a sensational "Invention" of the bodies of Brigid, Columba, and Patrick at Down;¹⁸ soon after this "Invention" a cautious writer, if he knew of it, might wish to mention only a minor part of her body as separate from the rest. There is no indication that these relics of Brendan and Brigid were ever celebrated either ante or post mortem, and they were

probably made up at random; Brendan's head and Brigid's foot sound like an *ad hoc* fiction by Lawman. Saints' legends originated from a somewhat higher level than merely popular religion, and relics do not *de facto* greatly figure in them. If there is any significance in these, they show knowledge of popular, rather than literary, Ireland. At all events, this entire addition by Lawman to Wace proves an unusual intimacy with Irish saints. There is no such intimacy among foreigners anywhere earlier save in Gerald de Barri's two slightly earlier Latin works on Ireland, *Expugnatio Hibernica* and *Topographia Hibernica*, both of about 1188, products of a long visit; and perhaps I should add William of Malmesbury's *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesiae*, whose audacious monks ransacked the world to increase its fame for relics, antiquity, and early favorers. Nor was such intimacy shown later for many a long day.

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¹⁷ *Acta sanctorum*, IV, 142, 144, 146, 154; Stokes, p. 190. For relics of her, but never a foot, see below, and also Arthur de la Borderie, *Hist. de Bretagne* (Rennes, 1898), II, 507, 509; *Patr. Lat.*, CLXXIX, 1690; *Recueil des hist. des croisades* (Paris, 1895), V, 240; Baring-Gould, II, 22; *Cath. encycl.*

¹⁸ Gerald de Barri, *Top. Hib.*, pp. 163-64; *Annals of Ulster*, III, 625; Higden, *Polychr.*, V, 305; *Acta sanctorum*, IV, 111. The "Invention" probably was a fraud of John de Courcy, lord of Down, with the purpose of reconciling the Irish to his rule. Bones of Brigid and Columba and relics of Brendan (among others) are mentioned in a late medieval Christ Church (Dublin) list of relics (*Bk. of Obits* [Irish Arch. Soc., 1844], p. 3). For reappearances in different places of identical relics see an uncritical, unsympathetic, amusing *Dizionario delle reliquie dei santi della chiesa di Roma* (Firenze, 1871) by an anonymous writer; also *Mandeville's travels*.

A NOTE ON OLD WEST GERMANIC POETIC UNITY

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OWING largely to circumstances of fate, the overwhelming bulk of the little corpus of Old West Germanic heroic poetry has survived in England in OE: *Béowulf*, *The Fight at Finn's Burh*, *Widsiþ*, *Déor*, and *Waldere*, a total of ca. 3,477 alliterative long lines. To this modest number of OE verses, equaling *Aeneid* i-v. 495, one can add the 68 lines of the *Lay of Hildebrand*, written in an OHG of sorts, and, last but by no means least, *Waltherii poësis* in 1,456 Latin hexameters, written perhaps at St. Gall in Switzerland. This yields a grand total of 5,001 lines in OE, OHG, and Latin, equaling *Aeneid* i-vii. 246. Such is the pathetically small corpus of surviving Old West Germanic heroic poetry.

As remarked at the outset, the overwhelming bulk of this verse is in the OE language, a more or less accidental fact having the not unnatural result that one tends to identify the OE heroic poetry too narrowly with OE literature; in a certain sense to ignore the OHG and Latin minority material; and, finally and historically most misleading, to overlook, ignore, or even be unaware of the fact that we have essentially to do with a great and geographically widespread unit—West Germanic heroic poetry—to which, in the last analysis and in the highest reality, all this material belongs. To put the matter in another way, I would say that Klaeber's great *Béowulf* edition might more appropriately have been entitled "West Germanic heroic poetry," Vol. I: "The vernacular poems." Such a title would, as a matter of fact, go far toward bringing the

reader to a properly accurate historical and artistic perspective.¹

That we have here to do with a oneness of poetic form and tradition that developed early—by the fourth or fifth century A.D. at the latest—among the West Germanic peoples on the Continent is all but irrefutable. With truly petty differences among the dialects, West Germanic poetry as a whole—and for the moment I include in my thoughts the religious poetry in OE and OS²—is of a piece; is cast in a single metrical and stylistic mold; and offers a type of unity that posits an early common Continental development of a unified, single poetic manner, which, in the course of centuries of time and, in the case of colonial England, of physical separation, evidently departed locally only slightly from an ancestrally established pattern. At least one of the *pulur* in *Widsiþ* may well have been composed on the Continent.

We can no longer appeal to an Old Saxon, an Old High German, an Old Englishman, or an Old Frisian for a statement of his feeling concerning an essential unity or disunity of West Germanic heroic poetry; nor have these same old West Germans on the Continent or in colonial England left us any pronouncement on

¹ Similarly, Francis B. Gummere's *The oldest English epic* (ed. of New York, 1923), including "the German Hildebrand," might far better be entitled "The oldest West Germanic epic."

² For a collection of phrasal parallels see O. Grütters, "Ueber einige Beziehungen zwischen altsächsischer und altenglischer Dichtung," *Bonner Beiträge zur Anglistik*, XVII (1905), 1-50; I need perhaps scarcely to add that I do not hold with the view here (p. 3) attributed to Trautmann that the OS *Heliand* and the OHG *Lay of Hildebrand* are translations from OE.

this point. Yet it is, I think, possible to show that in a certain real way this feeling of unity must have existed, or at least that nothing substantial would have stood in the way of such a feeling in the minds of West Germanic scopos of whatever provenance. Of the basic ethnic unity involved, Englishmen of Bede's day certainly did understand something (cf. Bede *Hist. eccl.* v. 9, *ad init.*).

Before insisting further on a unity or oneness in the West Germanic corpus of heroic poetry, it would be well, first, to ask whether there are any discrete differences between OE and OHG poetry, any substantial basis for separate classification. Of course there are. First and foremost, we have a geographical distinction: the OE poems were written in England, the OHG *Lay of Hildebrand* and a legion of lost works were written in Germany. That in itself is enough to put the OE poems into a history of OE literature and to exclude from the same the *Lay of Hildebrand* and the *Waltherii poësis*.³ By the same token, Tegnér's works written in Sweden belong in a history of Swedish literature, Ibsen's in a history of Norwegian literature. Then the question of language—or is it dialect?—comes to the fore. Here, too, we clearly have differences that can be utilized for legitimate classification. The *Fight at Finn's Burh* is in OE, the *Lay of Hildebrand* is in OHG; these poems are, linguistically at least, as different from one another as are the writings of Knut Hamsun, J. V. Jensen, and Selma Lagerlöf, of Björnson, and Strindberg. This question of language or dialect difference—a matter of degree rather

than of kind—I shall attempt to answer below.

Opposed to such obvious differences as place of composition and dialect are certain critically fundamental elements of unity or oneness. The essential unity of the stuff of which this heroic poetry is made emerges from even a casual survey of Germanic heroic legend. Most eloquent and succinct single witness of this is, perhaps, the OE *Widsiþ*; a study of Chambers' and of Malone's elegant apparatus should convince the most obdurate. Beyond a large common stock-in-trade of traditional story, the accumulations of parallel phrases and locutions that are sprinkled through the commentaries of this poetry in whatever language, even in that of the *Waltherii poësis*, afford striking testimony to a basic, persistent community of diction. The favored stichic meter is virtually the same in all the vernacular poems; that the OS poets had a special predilection for and, as it were, exploited the overlong or hypermetric line is a small matter, amounting perhaps to little more than a detail of personal taste or temporary vogue. Clearly, none of the above-mentioned counts justifies our talking about OE heroic poetry as though it were something essentially different from OHG, or vice versa. In the departments just discussed, the poetry in question is, to all intents and purposes, straight West Germanic with such differences as may exist between one man and another.⁴

³ Though written in Latin, this work surely enjoys within the framework of OHG literature as rightful and honored a place and status as does Saxo Grammaticus' Latin rendering of the all-but-lost ON *Bjarkamál* within the framework of ON literary history.

⁴ Compared to this unified West Germanic corpus, the old North Germanic or Scandinavian heroic poetry is very different, especially in the realms of diction and meter, i.e., in metrical patterns favored. Here one can, to be sure, easily see plenty of marks of an ultimate Germanic unity; but in the long centuries of Slav invasion, infiltration, and settlement across northern Germany many bonds between the North and West Germanic families were loosened and broken. There was much time for the specialized

There is no composing differences of place of composition: a work written in Fulda is written in Fulda, in Weissenburg i. El. in Weissenburg; a work written in York is written in York, in Winchester in Winchester, though such geographical differences may well be of no great moment if the works in question are not local in theme. But there remains the matter of language difference that can be very real and very distinguishing. And here we come to what seems to me to be more or less the crux of what—in considerable measure for my own instruction—I am trying to get at: How great and how significant were the linguistic differences? And, more important and, with our lack of direct testimony, far less easily determined, how great was this felt to be by West Germanic scopos, who were active from England to the Elbe, from the Elbe to the Alps? To what extent would the latter—men who obviously got about a good deal, again witness Widsiþ himself—have felt here a unity of form and spirit rather than a cluster of discrete poetic phenomena? Had these warrior-poets been accustomed to think in terms of present-day literary historians, would they have viewed this corpus as one tends to view modern Continental Scandinavian literature, namely, somehow collectively and as possessing a certain common "Scandinavian" unity, or even as many view British and American literature (not unparallel, since American literature, like OE and Gothic, is in certain ways a colonial phenomenon and in vocabulary and locutions often markedly different from the British product)? Or would the scopos have viewed the West Germanic corpus as

made up of elements as distinct, characteristically different, and "nationally" individual as today one naturally and properly views and contrasts modern English and modern Swedish literature?

Perhaps largely on account of present-day habits of studying the Old West Germanic dialects, it is easy to come to regard the existing differences as greater and more characteristic than the similarities, greater and hence more significant than they actually are, comparable, let us say, to modern English versus modern Swedish rather than as modern Norwegian versus modern Swedish. For example, I suspect that most English-speaking students who make an acquaintance with OE, namely, the majority of human beings who read the *Béowulf* at all, have only the haziest notions about OS⁵ and OHG; and I imagine that most of them would view with apprehension, if not downright alarm, being told in connection with a "*Béowulf* course": "Next time we'll begin the *Lay of Hildebrand* on p. 290" (Klaeber's 3d ed.). Such at least has been my experience. I further venture to guess that very few of the many owners of Klaeber's *Béowulf* have read the *Lay of Hildebrand* included there. After all, the *Lay of Hildebrand*—happy fusion of a migratory motif⁶ and Germanic heroic legend—does not belong

⁵ Though outside the scope of the present discussion, which centers on West Germanic heroic poetry, I cannot refrain from referring to the practical table of thirteen correspondences between OE and OS, given by Otto Behagel at the beginning of the glossary (p. 249) of his 4th ed. of *Heliand und Genesis* (Halle, 1933). From experience I know that students of OE who learn this highly effective table (by an effort comparable to learning a single multiplication table) proceed to read OS almost as readily as they had read OE. Conversely, I presume that students who have read a suitable amount of the *Heliand* could, by the same token, shift over with corresponding ease to the OE poems of, say, the Junius MS or the Vercelli book.

⁶ Key reference: Stith Thompson, *Motif-index of folk-literature*, § N 731.2 (Bloomington, Ind., 1935), V, 100.

developments that took place in many other fields than that of poetry north and south of the Danavirk-Baltic line.

in an "English program"! Nevertheless, any initial or anticipatory alarm over the *Lay of Hildebrand* on the part of students "majoring" in English is amazingly easily allayed, so easily, in fact, that one rather fancies that an OE or OS or OFris scop would have felt no alarm at all. The trick with the present-day student can be turned by a sort of ruse, namely, by presenting him or confronting him, as you will, with an OE—not modern English!—version of the OHG poetic fragment. It was for this purpose and only for this purpose that I originally attempted the version printed below. It is probably not very good OE; it is not metrical except accidentally (something of the same might be said for the original). It is not a tour de force and should not be viewed as such; such as it is, it was easy to do and quickly done, on the whole comparable to transposing the voice part of a song from B♭ to E♭. Many an OE scholar could do this far better and in less time than I. But it does translate or transpose (such, rather, is the act involved) the *Lay of Hildebrand* from

the dialect in which it survives to one that would at least be intelligible, though no doubt evoking a smile, to a pre-Conquest Englishman. One thinks in passing of the author of *Genesis B*, presumably a native speaker of OE,⁷ who left in his wake quite a trail of Old Saxonisms—thus leading Eduard Sievers to his detection!

My pseudo-OE version of the OHG *Lay of Hildebrand*⁸ now follows.

⁷ Apropos of my comment on ON poetry in n. 3, above, one might compare this OE author's relatively easy task of transposition and adaptation from OS to OE with the very different and far more difficult problem faced and admirably met by Stefn Einarsson in his successful Icelandic translation of *Widsiþ*, published in *Skirnir*, CX (1936), 164–90.

⁸ On this most famous Western treatment of the father-son combat motif and, from a literary point of view, the finest representative of the Hildebrand story, see especially Wilhelm Braune and Karl Helm, *Althochdeutsches Lesebuch* (9th ed.; Halle, 1928), pp. 83–84 for text, pp. 186–98 for notes and rich bibliography; there is a modern English translation in Bruce Dickinson's *Runic and heroic poems of the Old Teutonic peoples* (Cambridge, 1915), pp. 79–85. Note also Gustav Ehrismann, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, Part I (2d ed.; Munich, 1932), esp. pp. 121 ff.; and Hermann Schneider, *Germanische Heldensage*, I (Berlin, 1928), esp. 315–22; cf. also n. 6, above.

Since I am attempting neither to edit the German poem nor to produce an OE text of any authority or philological value, I follow Klaeber's OHG text uncritically.

HILDEBRANDES LÉOP

Ic gehierde þæt seggan,
þæt órettan áne wunnon,
Hildebrand and Heaðobrand, be herium twéonum;
sunu and fæder hira searo gegearcedon,

- 5 gearwedon hira gúphaman, gyrdon hie hira sweordum,
hæleþ, ofer hringas, þá hie tó þære hilde ridon.

Hildebrand maðelode (Herebrandes sunu)— hé wæs sé hárra man,
féores fróðra; hé frigan ongan

- 10 } féawum wordum, hwá his fæder wære
11 } fíra on folce, . . . "oððe hwilces cnóles þú síe;
gif þú mé ænne secge, ic þone oðerne wát,
cild, in cyneríce; cúþ is mé eall eormenþéod."

Heaðobrand maðelode, Hildebrandes sunu:

- 15 "þæt sægdon mé úre léode,
ealde and fróde, þá þe æror wæron,
þæt Hildebrand hátte mín fæder; ic hátte Heaðobrand.
Fyrn hé him éast gewát, fléah Éadwacores níp,
heonan mid þéodrice, and his þegna fela.

- 20 Hé forlét on lande lýtle sittan
brýd on búre, bearn unweaxen,
ierfeléase; hé rád éast heonan,
siððan Péodrice þearfe gelumpon
fæder mīnes,— þæt wæs swá fréondléas man.
- 25 Hé wæs Éadwacore ungemete ierre,
þegna déorest mid Péodrice.
Hé wæs áwa folces æt orde, him wæs áwa feohte léof;
cúþ wæs hé cenum mannum;
[þæs] ne wéne ic [on lande, þæt] hé gíet lifiende síe"
- 30 "Ic clipie tó Eormen-Gode (cwæþ Hildebrand) úfenan of heofone,
þæt þú náfre gíet mid swá néahsibbum men
þing ne gehégde"
Áwand hé þá of earme wundene béagas,
cáseringum gegierwede, swá him hie sé cyning geaf,
- 35 Húna dryhten: "þæt ic þé nú to hyldo giefe."
Heaðobrand maðelode, Hildebrandes sunu:
"Mid gáre seal man giefa onfón,
ord wip orde
þú eart eald Hún, ungemete gléawmód,
- 40 spenest mec mid þinum wordum, wilt mec þines speres weorpan;
eart swá geealdod man, swá þú á inwit besierwedest.
þæt sægdon mé sêlfðende
west ofer Wendelsæ, þæt hine wíg fornam:
'Déad is Hildebrand, Herebrandes sunu.'
- 45 Hildebrand maðelode, Herebrandes sunu:
"Wel ic geséo on þinum hrystum,
þæt þú hafast æt háme hláford góðne,
þæt þú ná gíet on þissum rice wrecca ne síe"⁹
"Wáláwá nú, Wealdend God (cwæþ Hildebrand), unwyrd gelimpeþ.
- 50 Ic wandrode sumera and wintra siextig of lande,
þær man mec á gescearode tó folce scéotendra,
ná þý ær man mé beforan byrig nænigre bealocwealm ne oþfæste;
nú seal mec swæs bearn sweorde héawan,
ábredwian mid his bille, oþþe him tó banan weorðan.
- 55 Swá þeah miht þú nú éaðelice, þonne þín ellen déah,
on þus hárum men hyrst gewinnan,
hildegeatwe réafian, gif þú þær énig riht hæbbe"
"Béo nú þá sé eargesta (cwæþ Hildebrand) Éastléoda,
sé þe þé nú wíges wierne, nú þec þæt swá wel lysteþ,
- 60 gúðe gemænre; wyrce sé þe móte,
hwæðer him (tódæge) þára hrægla hréman móste,
oððe þissa byrna béga wealdan."
þá léton hie ærest æsum scríðan,
scearpum scúrum, þæt [hit] on sciældum stóð.
- 65 þá stópon him tógéanes, stánbord clufon,
héowon hearmlíce hwíte sciældas,
oþ þæt him hira linde læssan wurdon,
tóbrocene mid wæpnum

⁹ It has been plausibly suggested that ll. 46-48 should follow l. 57.

This *Hildebrandes Léop* of mine furnishes, I hope, in its humble way a partial answer to certain questions raised in this paper: in general, the broad question of West Germanic poetic unity as possibly felt, if not expressed, by West Germanic scopos, regardless of their place of birth or the location of the courts in which they served; in particular, the narrower, though vital, question of relative dialect unity. Aided by this *curiosum*, I have read the OHG *Lay of Hildebrand* with several generations of students with little or no difficulty on their part and with an evidently quick recognition—also on their part—of the fact that they were face to face with a basic and easily recognizable unity of poetic tradition and of language. And if in these days, a round thousand years after these West Germanic poems were composed, such unity can be revealed by peeling off, as it were, a thin and transparent linguistic mask, it is hard to believe that the poets who composed these and countless other West Germanic heroic poems in this or that dialect did not understand and accept this unity somewhat as a matter of course. I do not want to suggest that a Tyrolean audience

of the year A.D. 750 would have understood without ado a recitation of the OE *Fight at Finn's Burh* by a man from the Tyneside, though I feel sure that contemporary Frisians and other coastal Germans and even persons living farther inland would have done so. One would not expect the best transmission through the medium of extremes. Linguistic adjustments would often have to be made, but adjustments of a truly simple character as regards both grammar, sound correspondences, and vocabulary.

Thus, in offering our "*Béowulf* courses" as part of an "English program," let us not fail to make clear to the student that he is sharing in a literature that is characteristically English chiefly, if not solely, in dialect coloring and that the poems in Klaeber's *Béowulf*, as well as the Latin *Waltharii poësis*, are, first and foremost, an expression of the poetic tradition of the greater West Germanic world of that day. To Englishmen of the seventh and eighth centuries and later belongs in a very real sense the *Lay of Hildebrand*; to a German of the same time, the *Béowulf*.

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FINN'S STRONGHOLD

KEMP MALONE

IN THE so-called *Finnsburg* fragment the stronghold of King Finn is referred to as *Finnsburuh*. The spelling we probably owe to Hickes; a better form would be *Finnes buruh* (two words).¹ The whereabouts of this stronghold has long been a subject of controversy. The lamented R. W. Chambers, in his *Beowulf: an introduction*, etc., after some discussion comes to the following conclusions:

The fight may have taken place at some outlying castle built by Finn, and named after him *Finnsburg*: then he returned, we are told, to his *heaburh*: and it is here, *at his sylfes* [sic] *ham*, "in his own home" (the poet himself seems to emphasize a distinction) that destruction in the end comes upon him. There is surely no difficulty here [p. 259].

Here Chambers makes the very doubtful presumption that *Finnsburuh* is one word (a proper name) rather than two words meaning simply 'Finn's stronghold.'

The "we are told" of Chambers refers to *Beowulf*, lines 1125-27a, the passage to which the present paper is primarily devoted. This passage reads thus:

Gewiton him ða wigend wica neosian
freondum befeallen, Frysland geseon,
hamas ond heaburh.

Here nothing is said of Finn, but Chambers perhaps took *wigend* to include king as well as retainers. Professor F. Klaeber, on the other hand, makes a sharp distinction between king and retainers. In the third edition of his *Beowulf* he writes:

The Frisian warriors—presumably men who had been summoned by Finn in preparation for his encounter with the Danes—return to their homes in the country (*heaburh* is a high-sounding epic term that should not be

pressed), whilst Hengest stays with Finn in *Finnes burh* (where the latter is afterwards slain: *at his selfes ham* 1147) [p. 174].

According to Klaeber, then, *heaburh* is a variation of *hamas*, in spite of the difference in number, and both words denote the same thing: the homes in the country that the Frisian warriors went back to when released from military service. This interpretation can hardly be right. The term *heaburh* befits the royal seat, not the manor houses of the warriors, and any demobilization on the part of Finn is incredible in the light of lines 1080 ff. (if he sent home many of the Frisian retainers left to him after the fight, he would thereby put himself at the mercy of Hengest and the other Danes). In my study of 1943,² I relegated the matter to a footnote, saying:

The statement on the face of it certainly points to a shift of scene from the *Finnsburuh* of the *Fragment* to a *heaburh*, presumably the main stronghold of King Finn (called *Finnes ham* in line 1156). But I will not enter into the scholarly debate on this question [p. 274].

Here the saving phrase "on the face of it" indicates my doubts. These doubts, and my inability to find a solution, led me to drop the subject and go on to other problems. If I now take the matter up again, it is because I have at last arrived at an interpretation which I think will hold.

In the *Beowulf* passage quoted above, it is the word *Frysland* most of all which has puzzled the commentators. Professor Ritchie Girvan in his British Academy lecture puts the difficulty thus:

After the funeral rites we are told that the warriors went to Frisia, Naturally inter-

¹ See F. P. Magoun, *ZfdA*, LXXVII (1940), 65 f.

² In *ELH*, X, 257-84.

preted the words mean that they were not in Frisia but went there immediately after cremating the bodies of the dead. Immediate departure with the association in prospect proves that they went off together. Taken in its literal sense this means that the earlier events did not take place in Frisia, and that if they took place at Finnsburh, then Finnsburh was not in Frisia. . . . Accepting the name Finnsburh, it is not easy to believe that it does not denote Finn's chief stronghold. . . . A Finnsburh outside Finn's own territory seems incredible.³

It will be noted that Girvan believes that the Danish and Frisian warriors "went off together." I expressed the same opinion in my study of 1943. In my earlier study of 1926,⁴ I had rightly taken the passage to refer to the Danish warriors only. Klaeber, as we saw above, takes it to refer to the Frisian warriors only. We shall have to return to this question in a moment.

The meaning of the *Beowulf* passage can hardly be cleared up except by systematic study. And here the first thing to note is that the passage begins Fit XVII of the poem and accordingly might be expected to mark a new phase of the action. This has always been recognized, however, and in itself it is too vague to help us much. We proceed, then, to take up the words and phrases which need attention. Little need be said about *ða*; it is probably the adverb, not the definite article, though the word order makes this interpretation somewhat less than certain (compare the plainly adverbial *ða* of l. 26). The expression *wica neosian* answers to the *wica neosan* of line 125, where *wica*, though plural in form, is singular in meaning. The same holds of the five other occurrences of the word in the poem. Klaeber in his glossary notes that *wic* is "pl. freq. w. sg. meaning," but his "freq."

should be deleted, as there is no evidence that the *Beowulf* poet ever used this word in a plural sense. Especially worthy of note is the *in wicun* of line 1304, which varies the *in Heorote* of line 1302. Since a retainer's dwelling-place was his lord's *burh* or hall, we are justified in taking the *wica* of our passage (l. 1125) as a reference to Finn's *burh* or hall. The line is to be translated thus: "The warriors then departed [from the scene of the funeral rites] to seek out their dwelling-place." In other words, after the funeral the retainers went back to the royal *burh* or hall. No demobilization is implied in line 1125, *pace* Klaeber.

We come now to the heart of our problem in line 1126. Klaeber glosses *geseon* with 'go to,' but he cites no parallels, and I have found none. The primary meaning 'see' hardly fits the context, but the *gesawon* of line 2252 means 'saw to the end,' and the same meaning is applicable here. In my opinion, *gewiton* . . . *Fryslanð* *geseon* means "they departed [from the pyre] to see the last of Frisia" (that is, to enter upon the last stage of their stay in that country). Such a statement would naturally apply to the Danes, who, though they had taken service with Finn, were destined not to serve him long. When they went back to the royal hall after the funeral, they were, in fact, entering upon the last stage of their stay in Frisia.

Our passage ends with a *hamas ond heaburh*, 'manors and royal castle,' which is used to vary *Fryslanð*. It is effective as a piece of stylistic decoration but adds little or nothing to the meaning. One may compare such a modern (rhetorical) way of speaking as "Milan with its factories and great cathedral." Our passage as a whole may be rendered thus:

Then they left [the scene of the funeral ceremonies], the warriors bereft of friends, to seek out their dwelling-place [i.e., Finn's

³ *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XXVI, 344.

⁴ *JEGP*, XXV, 158.

burgh, to see the last of Frisia [with its] manors and royal castle.

The rest of the section (ll. 1127-45) is devoted to one of these warriors, whose state of mind is representative of that of the Danes as a group. And Hengest's state of mind the winter through may be summed up as a longing to see the last of Frisia.

It is now evident that here, as elsewhere in the Finnsburg episode of *Beowulf*, the poet has the Danes in mind. Our passage is concerned with the Danish warriors only. They are the ones whose fortunes the poet is following in his narrative. Klaeber's interpretation, then, is wrong from beginning to end. But Chambers, too, was wrong in making a distinction between the Finnsburh of the *Fragment* and the heaburh of the *Beowulf* episode. The two fights that figure in the tale both take place at Finn's burh, otherwise referred to as the heaburh (l. 1127), his selfes ham (l. 1147), and Finnes ham (l. 1156). This burh was situated in Frisia, of course. It presumably consisted of a complex of buildings, one of which was the hall which the Danes defended against Frisian attack (as we learn from the *Fragment*). The funeral rites were presumably held, not within the burh, but at a suitable spot in the immediate neighborhood. Finn and the Danes came to terms because of the peculiarities of the physical setting: Finn could not expel the Danes from the hall by force and could not set fire to the hall without destroying his whole burh; the Danes could not hold out indefinitely because in time they would run short of food and drink. In a way, the Danes had the advantage: if it came to the worst, they could always sally forth, leaving the hall in flames behind them and thereby dooming the whole burh to destruction. But they could use this advantage only at the price of their lives, because, when they gave up their excel-

lent defensive position in the hall and went out into the open, their own doom would be sealed.

Finn offered the Danes the best of terms because, above all, he did not wish to drive them to desperation: as desperate men they could do him the gravest damage. The Danes accepted the terms because they had to, unless, indeed, they chose to die. As the poet puts it, they entered Finn's service *þa him swa geþearfod was* (l. 1103). And, having made terms with Finn, they became honor-bound to keep those terms. Not only were they debarred from avenging on Finn the death of Hnæf; it was now their duty to defend Finn against attack, for they had become his retainers. This was the bitterest cup of all, and the *Beowulf* poet is at pains to picture Hengest (who speaks for the Danish *wealaf*) as letting his imagination go, making plans for that vengeance which he could not in honor wreak.

But if the Danes who had entered Finn's service could not honorably wreak vengeance on him, they could induce their fellow-Danes to do so; such was the legalistic ethics of Germanic times. The poet tells us that Guthlaf and Oslaf, after a sea voyage, whetted the Danes (at home) against Finn. We are not told why or how they had come to replace Hengest as spokesmen for the *wealaf*. We may, however, reasonably suppose that they did not make the voyage alone; the whole *wealaf* presumably left Frisia with them.⁶ Possibly Finn let his unwilling Danish retainers go; possibly they deserted; we cannot say. In any case, they had seen the last of Frisia. Their part in the tale of Finnsburg had been played. They had to leave it to others to man the ships of the punitive expedition and wreak that vengeance on Finn from which they themselves were debarred.

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⁶ See my discussion in *ELH*, X (1943), 283 f.

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